

Early release of merger report

DTI blunder puts Ridley under pressure

By PHILIP WEBSTER AND DAVID BREWERTON

MR NICHOLAS Ridley was under attack on two fronts last night as MPs criticized his handling of the House of Fraser affair and his department admitted a blunder that led to premature publication of a monopolies report on the proposed Kingfisher takeover of Dixons.

Dealers trading in Dixons shares could have made substantial gains before trading in the two electrical companies was suspended at lunchtime with the Dixons price down 11p. The potential for even greater profits was limited only because the monopolies commission's opposition to the takeover was widely expected.

The Department of Trade and Industry had to rush out Mr Ridley's decision to block the £568 million takeover after the report was put on sale by mistake at stationery offices. It had known nothing of the error until Kingfisher told the ministry that the report was open sale.

Last night, Mr Gordon Brown, the shadow Secretary of State for Trade and Industry secretary, called for an immediate inquiry by the department into the Government's "incompetence and mismanagement" which led to speculative profits being made.

The department had earlier been besieged by an all-party committee of MPs, which said Mr Ridley should have

used his powers to allow the courts to decide whether the Fayed brothers should be disqualified as directors of House of Fraser.

The committee's report said: "Rarely can a government department's discharge of its responsibilities have been held in such low esteem among others involved." It accused Mr Ridley - who was yesterday in Italy on European Community business - of complacency and his department of dilatoriness, particularly over enforcing insider trading rules.

The report was coloured by the committee's evident anger over the Government's response to the DTI inspectors' report on the takeover of House of Fraser by the Fayed brothers. There were indications that the department's performance was improving, not least through the Financial Services Act and other new legislation, but this impression "was confounded by the lack of action taken against the Fayed brothers following publication of the House of Fraser report".

Lord Young acted on the advice of Sir Gordon Binnie, the director general of fair trading, who told the committee he thought it unlikely the commission would have ordered divestment.

The release of the Kingfisher takeover report 24 hours ahead of schedule meant neither of the companies concerned had been told of the recommendations before it went on sale. Trading was brisk before share dealing in the companies was suspended, and the Stock Exchange does not consider that those who dealt were "insider trading" since the report had been published, even though it was in error.

The Department of Trade and the stationery office were investigating the blunder and the ministry has apologized to the companies.

A takeover would have created an electrical goods group five times bigger than its nearest competitor, Rumbelows.

Investigations report, page 23
Fall Dixons timetable, page 23
Comment, page 25



Timetable of a blunder

How the Monopolies Commission report into Kingfisher's bid for Dixons was released, amid confusion, by the Department of Trade and Industry:

9.00am Monopolies Commission Report is put on sale by HMSO in London.

10.30 Kingfisher obtains a copy of the report.

11.00 Rumours sweep City and Dixons shares fall 11p to 120p.

11.20 Kingfisher is told by the DTI that the report will not be published until Thursday.

11.30 Mr Geoffrey Mulcahy, chairman of Kingfisher, telephones Mr Nicholas Ridley's

private office to discuss the situation. He is told Mr Ridley is abroad and he warns of a possible false market.

11.40 Analysts begin to telephone Kingfisher about the report.

11.55 Kingfisher telephones Stock Exchange to suggest shares suspension.

12.00 Dixons and Kingfisher shares are suspended by Stock Exchange.

12.45 DTI apologizes to Mr Mulcahy and says procedures will be investigated.

12.55 DTI announces report is published and Mr Ridley accepts recommendations against the bid.

Nation to vote on Soviet 'new deal'

From MARY DEJEVSKY
IN MOSCOW

THE people of the Soviet Union will decide in a nationwide referendum if they want their centrally planned economy to be transferred to market principles, it was revealed yesterday.

The referendum is likely to be held some time before the autumn in an attempt by the leadership to gain popular support for measures which will require average food prices to double and sharp increases in the price of many other goods.

The proposal - which will have to be ratified by the Supreme Soviet - was announced in Moscow at a press conference held to introduce the final draft of the Government's programme, which was approved by Mr Gorbachov's Presidential Council on Tuesday and will be presented to the Soviet Parliament today.

As well as hefty price rises, the proposals envisage a "major programme" of buying food and food processing equipment from abroad, and nine new pieces of legislation - including laws on foreign investment, a comprehensive system of social security and ending monopolies. The money is to come from further cuts in defence spending.

One of the new laws establishes an extensive programme of public works such as road-building to utilize labour shed by non-viable industrial enterprises and reduce unemployment.

The press conference was given by Mr Yuri Maslyukov, a First Deputy Prime Minister and chairman of the State Planning Committee, Gosplan and Mr Leonid Abelkin, Deputy Prime Minister and chairman of the committee on economic reform.

The whole programme was compared by Mr Maslyukov to Roosevelt's "new deal". He said the Soviet Government had rejected Poland's economic "shock therapy" - with immediate price rises, a convertible currency and untrammelled free enterprise - as a model for the Soviet Union because of "the financial state of the country and present living standards".

It would lead to a catastrophic fall in output, he said, and make an estimated 40 million people redundant.

Leading article, page 13

Britain sets CO₂ target to curb global warming

By MICHAEL McCARTHY, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

THE Government has directly confronted the problem of global warming by fixing a target for controlling future UK emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂), the gas from coal-fired power stations and motor vehicles principally responsible for the greenhouse effect.

The decision to fix the target at the 1990 level by 2005 was taken by the Cabinet Committee on the Environment, chaired by Mrs Margaret Thatcher.

The moving force behind it is Mr Chris Patten, Secretary of State for the Environment, who, with Mrs Thatcher, feels it is practically possible.

Many scientists and environmentalists have endorsed the call made in Toronto in 1988 for a worldwide 20 per cent reduction of CO₂ emissions by 2005, against present levels, rather than mere stabilization.

The UK commitment is also less than will be urged on Britain by European Community states next month when stabilization at 1990 levels will be called for by the year 2000.

Five years earlier, the British Government is not convinced that its initial operation should result in assistance to this group.

Mr Peter Frv, Tory MP for

Wellingborough, said that there should be "an additional amount of transitional relief" for married women who do not go out to work.

But senior ministers are letting it be known that such a move is too expensive to contemplate. It would swallow much of the extra £3 billion that Mr Chris Patten, the Secretary of State for the Environment, needs to win from the Treasury in the current public spending round to hold down poll tax bills next year.

Ministers are also opposed to the move on the grounds of principle. They argue that removing such a large number

Poll tax hopes for 5m dashed

By NICHOLAS WOOD
and PHILIP WEBSTER

EXEMPTING Britain's five million non-working wives from the poll tax would cost £1.8 billion, the Government has disclosed, dashing the hopes of some Conservative MPs that the women might be spared the new charge.

In fixing its own CO₂ target, the Government has had to steer a course between what much of the environmental lobby is calling for and what it feels is practically possible.

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Hymn for harmony: New York's Governor and Mayor, Mr Mario Cuomo (left), and Mr David Dinkins (right), joining religious, political and union leaders in song during a rally for racial tolerance attended by 6,000 people at the Cathedral of St John the Divine yesterday

INSIDE
Shares hit by trade figures

Britain's trade deficit fell last month from £2.09 billion to £1.78 billion, the second bad figure in a row, and sterling, shares and gilts all dipped initially.

City economists pointed out that practically all the improvement came from movements in erratic items such as ships, aircraft and precious stones. Exports continued to grow strongly but there was also an upward trend in imports.

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Gummer pledge

Beef is "absolutely safe to eat" Mr John Gummer, the Minister of Agriculture, told a Commons committee, and promised that he was putting consumer safety first.

Page 2

GPs to advertise

GPs were given permission by the General Medical Council to advertise their services on television, radio and in newspapers.

Page 3

Silent force

Mr David Waddington, the Home Secretary, was greeted with silence by 2,000 representatives at the Police Federation annual conference, as a protest over housing allowances.

Page 5

Lower alert

Nato defence ministers agreed that the state of readiness of some of the alliance's standing forces in Central Europe could be lowered for the first time since the beginning of the Cold War.

Page 10

England lose

England lost to New Zealand by four wickets off the penultimate ball in the first one-day cricket international at Headingley.

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How the Prince of many tongues was licked

By ALAN HAMILTON

Deprecating his own linguistic abilities with undue modesty, the Prince of Wales yesterday spoke of his moment of blind panic when asked to act as interpreter between President Mitterrand of France and Herr Helmut Schmidt.

During a European Community lunch at Buckingham Palace M Mitterrand, who could not or would not speak German, wished to tell a story to Herr Schmidt, then West German Chancellor, who claimed no French. The Prince, who in spite of his protestations can hold intelligent conversations in French, German, Italian and Welsh, was summoned.

"I hadn't done French dictation since I was at school. The result was disastrous. M Mitterrand lost me in the first line of the first sentence when

he began: 'Un vieux savant...' Panic descended on my overloaded brain. 'An old soap...' I translated to myself ... it can't be possible. Two sentences later, the Prince gave up in disgust and went off to find a more competent interpreter."

But the royal discomfiture, disclosed during an address to the Royal Society of Arts on the urgent need for British business to improve their foreign language skills, was as nothing to the plight of the distinguished but unidentified British politician required to address a Soviet audience.

"He thought it would make a good impression to say his opening words in Russian and duly did so, having noted down as he drove through Moscow what he thought was 'Ladies and gentlemen' in Russian. Why, he asked his staff later, was there a stunned silence and no applause?"

They would have appreciated it better, sir, came the reply, if you hadn't referred to ladies and gentlemen as animals and water closets."

In two years time, the Prince told an audience of leading businessmen, Britain would find itself part of a single market of 320 million people, 82 per cent of whom did not have English as their mother tongue. And yet, how often did we see British commercial representatives at trade fairs abroad hard put to communicate with their potential customers?

Britain's prosperity and influence in the future would depend very largely on our knowledge and mastery of the languages spoken by our partners. "I wonder how far our current trade deficit is attributable to the low priority which British business has given to language training in the past?" the Prince asked on the

Review, page 19

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Police give minister the silent treatment

By STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

TWO thousand representatives of Britain's police greeted the Home Secretary with a deliberate, stony silence as he spoke at the Police Federation's annual conference in Scarborough yesterday.

Mr David Waddington, speaking at the conference for the first time, ignored the treatment and later said the conference was entitled to make its point strongly. "There is no cause for resentment. I put my views robustly in reply. I have a broad back," he said.

The decision to snub the minister — a Labour Home Secretary was given the same treatment 13 years ago — was taken in a private session of conference by delegates irate about policing policies and the way the Home Office has overridden proposed new housing allowances.

In sharp contrast, the federation gave its chairman, Mr Alan Eastwood, a standing ovation lasting several minutes after a speech in which he accused the Government of betrayal by undermining morale. He told the Home Secretary: "It is time to speak up for Britain's bobbies. Mr Waddington, Mrs Thatcher, we ask you: what price loyalty?"

As silence then settled, the minister lightly noted that the conference had a tradition of not applauding home secretaries, which was good because it meant everyone could get to lunch earlier. He then declared that it was time for the police to stop complaining and to recognize how well off they had become.

Pledging continued government support, Mr Waddington said that since 1979, spending on the police had risen by 59 per cent over and above inflation. Pay had increased by 41 per cent. "That is the price of loyalty," he told the conference. Police strength



Voice in the darkness: Mr David Waddington's speech to the Police Federation was greeted with determined impassiveness in a protest over government "disloyalty"



London officers received an increase of 57 per cent and in Warwickshire the rise was 67 per cent, which bore no relation to the true rise in living costs. Changes had been made after calls from the federation but nothing more could be done. It was time to accept the situation and get on with other things.

In a speech promoted as an outline of policy, Mr Waddington ruled out any ques-

tion of turning to an officer earning £20,000, including class or of a national or regional policing system, but he did not rule out amalgamations of smaller forces.

Speeches by home secretaries are usually applauded at appreciated points and end with an ovation. Mr Waddington sat down to silence.

He later continued to defend his decisions on police housing, noting that young officers in London could be

the improvements of the past decade, but others have done equally well — including politicians and ministers. MPs were not finding difficulties in recruiting and were generously treated.

"It's a bit rich to try and justify what has been done to us on the grounds the police are overpaid," he said. No one worried about police pay when officers were called in to take over from striking prison

officers or ambulance drivers.

After the speeches, Mr Eastwood disputed some of the Home Secretary's figures, saying the federation would not give up its fight on the issue of allowances but would look to Parliament and a judicial review. If all else failed, future conferences might well talk of becoming a proper trade union.

Legal changes, page 12

London failing to win crime battle

By QUENTIN COWDRY
HOME AFFAIRS
CORRESPONDENT

POLICE and London's citizens are failing to win the battle against crime in the capital, according to figures released yesterday. They show that recorded offences have risen by 36 per cent since 1979, while cleanup rates have slipped from 20 per cent to 17 per cent.

In publishing the Metropolitan Police's 1989 report Sir Peter Imbert, the force's commissioner, said that his staff had achieved a record "output". Arrests and detection rates stood at historically high levels, along with calls for assistance. More officers had been put on the beat.

Closer reading, however, of the report shows that Sir Peter was anxious to put the best gloss on the difficulties a rising crime rate is placing on his force. An overview of London crime statistics in the report shows that the overall clear-up rate was higher at the start of the Second World War than last year. In 1939, 26 per cent of the 94,600 offences recorded were solved, compared with 17 per cent of the 716,500 offences recorded in 1989.

A crime which is cleared up is defined by police as one where a suspect is either charged, cautioned or summoned. It also applies to offences taken into consideration by courts when sentencing crimes committed by juveniles under the age of criminal responsibility and offences admitted by prisoners.

The ability of the police to clear-up around a quarter of recorded crimes stayed constant between 1939 and the mid-1970s, according to the overview, but seems to have dipped in the late 1970s. In 1979 only 20 per cent of the 557,400 recorded offences were solved.

Detection rates for most of the main crime categories deteriorated between 1979 and 1989, the only exceptions being sexual crimes.

Crimes cleared up

	1979 %	1989 %
Violence against the person	55	59
Sexual offences*	52	51
Robbery	23	15
Burglary and going equipped	12	9
Theft and handling stolen goods	20	15
Fraud and forgery	60	63
Crash damage	14	12
Other†	60	94
Total††	20	17

*After 1982 this group includes gross statutory prostitution. After 1986 this group includes trafficking in controlled drugs.

Housing a constant source of friction

HOUSING allowances, one of the main issues causing friction between the police and the Government, is likely to continue to dog the relationship for some time to come (Stewart Tendler writes).

Police have a rent allowance calculated roughly on the rent of a standard house in their force's area plus an element included for rates. They have also received compensation for tax paid on the allowance.

The system was reviewed recently and went to arbitrators, who suggested a housing allowance that would also go to officers living in police homes. Those officers had been living free but would now pay rent. All officers would pay the poll tax, and the housing allowance would be reviewed based on a formula including the retail price index and house prices in bands across the country.

The Home Office turned down the arbitration although the police say that could be done only for reasons of the "national interest" under agreements. The Home Office has made some concessions but is insisting overall that serving officers will continue to get their money as at present, but it will not be increased until the new allowance system catches up with it.

The new system will apply to new officers. The formula for the housing element will be based on the old rent allowance but without the money that was included for rates or the cash to offset taxation. Increases will be based only on the RPI and reviewed every two years. Officers in police houses will get nothing.

Workers in other emergency services have no housing allowance. Firemen are provided with free uniforms and can claim medical allowances for certain prescriptions and treatment. They are able to have medical charges incurred at work reimbursed, if those are covered under the National Health Service Act of 1977. A fireman, on an average salary of £13,125 after four years' service, must pay nearly 11 per cent of his wages into a pension fund. Lower-ranking firemen must retire at 55.

Ambulance workers receive free uniforms and travel allowances. In London, the travel allowance is about £1,300 a year and is added on to salaries. The Department of Health said hospital doctors and nurses receive no allowances for medical care or accommodation. Nurses are charged for their lodgings by the National Health Service.

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Curriculum 'won't solve literacy problems'

By DAVID TYTLER, EDUCATION EDITOR

LEGALLY enforced tests of children's ability to read and write, as demanded by the Government through the National Curriculum, are unlikely to improve the literacy of at least one million teenagers who say they have difficulty in reading and writing using correct spelling.

Mr Wells, director of the government-financed Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit (Absu), says: "It is not enough to know what is wrong with an individual child. We must know how to put it right. Most teachers can tell you what is wrong, what we need to know is how we can put it right."

Mr Wells, a former teacher, emphasized that the findings should not be taken as proving there were more illiterate teen-

agers now than in the recent past. He said: "It would be easy to blame the schools but children are affected by their parents, even employers. There are older people coming to our units taught by traditional methods."

Mr Wells said a survey of 1,000 people aged between 16 and 20, published yesterday, which showed that one in four young people in England and Wales admitted to having reading problems and more than one-third had difficulty with spelling, should not be used to give a national picture of illiteracy.

The figures from the limited survey, where people were asked to judge their own literacy level, suggested that one million people aged under 20 were finding it difficult to read and write. The latest figures show that about 300,000 adults are completely illiterate. The survey did show, however, that unemployed young people had more difficulty in filling job application forms. One in four of the unemployed said they could not fill forms.

The problem facing Absu is that 45 per cent of those interviewed said they did not know where there were classes where they could learn to read and write and one-third said they did not want to learn.

Mr Wells said: "It would be too simple to blame the schools for failing to teach children how to read and write. If it was just them we could solve the problem."

"There is a mixture of reasons, parents who do not motivate their children to read, homes where there are no books and sometimes, it has to be said, bad teaching. There are older people in our teaching units who also have difficulty in reading and spelling and who have been taught by traditional methods. They cannot read either."

The inability to read and write fluently was felt most by the unemployed. A quarter said they were unable to fill in job application forms. Nearly half - 43 per cent - said they never read books while 99.1 per cent said they read newspapers or magazines.

If the figures of this survey were spread nationally it would mean that nearly a million 16 to 20-year-olds have difficulties with reading while 1.5 million face difficulties with spelling.

Dr Green, who gave evidence at the M1 air disaster inquest, reiterated his view that a three-man crew is preferable to a two-man crew because a third man can check the actions of the others in an emergency and keep a look out while they are busy with instruments and controls. His view had been challenged earlier by Mr Philip Condit, executive vice-president of Boeing, who said research had proved that two men were safer than three because it was easier to communicate between two people.

Dr Green urged aircraft manufacturers to concentrate far more effort on producing well designed and large instruments to avoid confusion and to help pilots, "who may be over 40 with slightly failing eyesight", to see them clearly.

He told a regional SHA meeting in Redbridge, north-east London: "Standards in the core subjects may be externally moderated if necessary and guidelines on assessment techniques can be offered. Any more than that would impose an impossible burden on pupils and teachers alike. At all costs, let us avoid mad examination disease."

"By putting computers into the aircraft we have put the pilot at a greater distance from the raw data and the real world. Flying an aircraft now is often no different from flying a simulator. This is great while they work but if they start to go wrong it is difficult for the pilot to second guess the computer," he said.

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Helicopter airlifts a mountain footpath

ASADOUR GUEZIAN



A helicopter flying in part of a consignment of 120 tonnes of industrial sandstone to a mountain top in the Yorkshire Dales yesterday to repair a footpath worn away by hill walkers. In more than 100 sorties between the summit and a quarry at nearby Ingleton, North Yorkshire, the aircraft ferried one-tonne loads of hardcore allowing workers to lay down more

than 30 yards of refurbished footpath an hour (Ronald Faux writes). Pressure from 120,000 pairs of boots a year heading for Ingleborough summit, a popular viewpoint, had transformed the track across Little Ingleborough into a quarry more than 30ft wide. Specialists from the Yorkshire Dales National Park experimented with a number of solutions and

decided to lay a bedding of geotextile buried beneath the tonnes of sandstone, creating the illusion of a natural footpath. The airlift is part of an £800,000 experimental programme in the Three Peaks area, which the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology has described as having one of the worst eroded footpaths in the United Kingdom.

Solicitors move to limit top judges' veto power

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

A MOVE to stop senior judges exercising a power of veto that would restrict the opening up of the higher courts to solicitors is expected in the Commons today.

An amendment promoted by the Law Society has been tabled to the Courts and Legal Services Bill, now in committee, which would reduce the proposed role of the senior judges under the legal reforms to a consultative one.

The society says that the issue of lawyers' rights of audience - which lawyer can

appear in what court - determines public access to the courts. That is such a fundamental matter that it must be for Parliament, rather than the judges, to have the final say." The senior judges, the society says, should have a voice, but not a veto.

The society, whose amendment is being tabled by Mr Peter Temple-Morris, Tory MP for Leominster, and former barrister turned solicitor, is concerned that under present proposals the entire aim of the Government's legal

reforms could be thwarted by the senior judiciary.

Under the Bill, the new rules governing the exercise of wider advocacy rights by solicitors will have to be approved by the Lord Chancellor and four senior judges. In its briefing paper to MPs, however, the Law Society says it does not believe "judicial approval of these rules should be required."

"There is a risk that it will lead to Parliament's wish to extend clients' choice of advocate being frustrated, especially as the judges have indicated in their response to the proposals that they are opposed to opening up the higher courts to solicitor-advocates."

The amendment, which is expected to be reached today, would instead require the Lord Chancellor to consider the decision of each of the designated senior judges when deciding whether to approve new rules on opening up the higher courts.

Although the Bar's code of conduct permits barristers to publicize charging rates, only one set has done so. It also permits mention of cases in chambers' brochures with the client's permission, but few have taken advantage of this. The directory invited barristers to "blow their own trumpet." Mr Purnell said: "But the Bar has traditionally been a referral profession. Barristers rely on their reputation on their professional clients." Mr Nicholas Stewart, QC, a member of the Bar Council, said yesterday that though he did not think the Bar would co-operate, his chambers, the only one to have disclosed fees, had no objection to giving that kind of information.

The Government is expected to resist the move, maintaining that the judges had always had a role in deciding who should have rights of audience in the courts. It also says, however, that in reaching their decision, judges will have to heed advice both from the new Lord Chancellor's lay dominated advisory committee as well as from the Director General of Fair Trading.

In the Government's parallel legal reforms proposed in Scotland, a different mechanism is planned by which solicitors will acquire wider rights of audience, which will not involve judges, "keeping them clear of any disputes between the two branches of the profession," the society says.

TUC offers its own credit card

By TIM JONES, EMPLOYMENT CORRESPONDENT

THE TUC yesterday planted its feet irrevocably in the capitalist camp by launching a credit card as part of its strategy of maintaining and improving membership of the union movement.

Introducing the card, which has a potentially large market of more than six million users, Mr Norman Willis, general secretary of the TUC, said: "The credit card is particularly important because it is a modern benefit and a highly visible one. It shows our members and potential members that the unions are moving with the times, and utilizing - dare I say exploiting - the financial system to their benefit."

The card will be promoted "unashamedly and deliberately" as being exclusively for trade union members and is designed to appeal to trade union loyalty.

Mr Willis said the movement recognized the growing concern about easy and excessive credit which could lead to bad debt. To combat this, lower paid members could acquire a card which would have a small credit limit.

"This will still be a useful amount - a good few tankfuls of petrol, for example - but a restraint on overspending and bad debt."

One big attraction of the card, which can be used as easily as any other credit card, is there will be no annual fee.

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The card has been developed by the TUC with Unity Financial Services, part of the trade union owned Unity Trust Bank group and is a MasterCard issued by the Bank of Scotland.

GRAHAM WOOD



Chief Rabbi urges training to prepare for marriage

By KERRY GILL

LORD Jakobovits, the Chief Rabbi, yesterday suggested that couples should undergo a form of training to prepare them for the potential pitfalls of marriage when he addressed the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

In his speech, the first by a Chief Rabbi to the assembly, Lord Jakobovits said that the coming decade posed greater challenges to religion than ever before.

Citing the present parlous condition of marriage, he said: "The family has become a disaster area. Its widespread breakdown exacts a higher social and economic cost by fuelling crime, and drugs and drink addiction, than any AIDS epidemic. Perhaps we should insist on pre-marital training before we issue marriage licences."

Lord Jakobovits said: "We need to intensify the reverence for human life before birth by respect for the embryo and before death by opposing euthanasia, if the horrors of violence and murder is to make our society safer."

"The challenge is to turn the aim of life from having a good time into making the times good. Religion must play a key

Virus may be a missing link to Aids

By THOMSON PRENTICE SCIENCE CORRESPONDENT

IMPORTANT new insights into the origins of the Aids virus have emerged with the discovery of a very similar organism in chimpanzees in Gabon, west equatorial Africa.

Researchers believe it may represent a missing link between the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) - which causes Aids - and infections in some species of monkeys. The new virus is much more closely related to HIV-1, the most common form of the Aids virus, than any of the related organisms previously detected in monkeys.

Details of the findings are published in today's issue of *Nature*. An article says they represent "the most significant clues to date" on the origins of HIV.

Scientists from the Pasteur Institute in Paris and an international research centre in Gabon identified the new virus in two chimpanzees; they found it corresponded closely with all the proteins of HIV-1. The overall genetic organization of the two viruses was the same and the researchers believe the chimpanzee organism is a distinct sub-type. They suggest that there is a larger pool of related viruses among primates than previously suspected.

A commentary in *Nature* says there have been two possibilities for the origins of HIV-1. The virus may always have been present in humans but gone unrecognized. According to this theory, human migration, extensive travel, sexual promiscuity and the re-use of syringes and hypodermic needles could have triggered its spread.

Alternatively, the infection may have entered the human population by transmission from another species. African green monkeys and other primates have been found to have their own immunodeficiency viruses but these are regarded as distant relatives of the human version.

Scientists have speculated that people became infected through being bitten or scratched by monkeys, or by eating them. The latest findings suggest that HIV may have evolved from the chimpanzee virus, which in turn resulted from infection by monkeys. However, hundreds of captive chimpanzees have been examined and none has been found to be naturally infected with the agent.

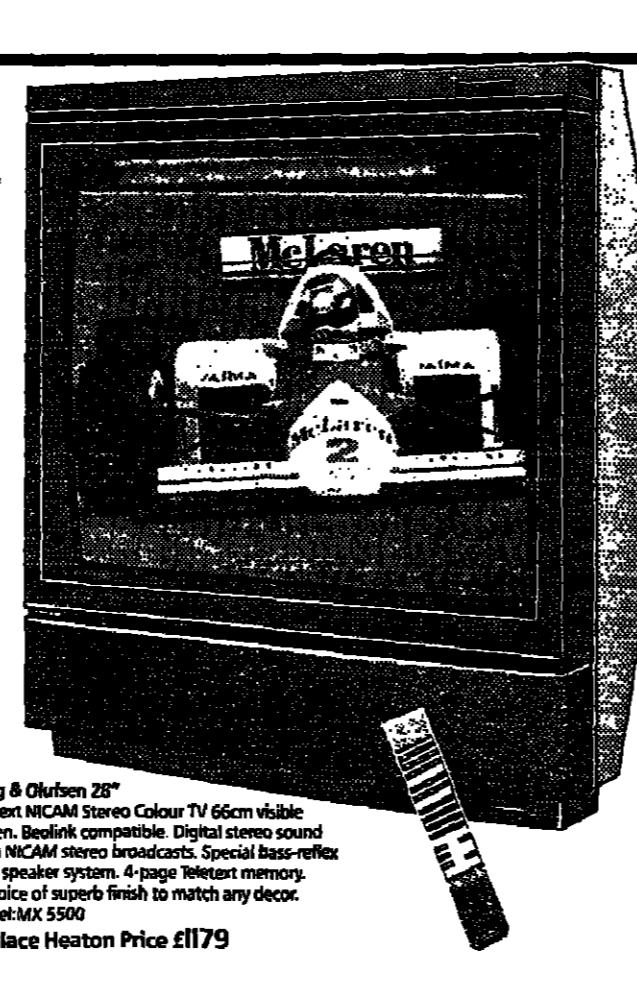
The new discovery does not provide a final solution to HIV's origins, says *Nature*, but adds to the "fascinating molecular-genetic game" of unravelling them.

• Hospital consultants yesterday urged the Government to provide £10 million towards treating thousands of kidney patients with a new drug which can dramatically improve their condition.

Only about one in five patients are being given the drug, erythropoietin (EPO), because of its high price. A year's treatment costs up to £5,000 and specialists are having to ration its use.

Earlier this week the Department of Health licensed the drug but refuses to provide central funding for it. It has told regional health authorities they must pay for it from their existing budgets.

Science and Technology, pages 33-36



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Brooke strategy paves the way for Ulster inter-party talks

By EDWARD GORMAN
IRISH AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

THE leaders of Northern Ireland's unionist community are now closer to opening talks with their nationalist counterparts than at any time in the past four and a half years, a senior Unionist politician said yesterday.

Mr Peter Robinson, deputy leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, an avowed revisionist and regarded as among the most progressive of Unionist MPs, said Ulster was now "well on the way" to inter-party negotiations. He said the province was closer to talks than at any stage since the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985.

Mr Robinson's upbeat assessment in

Belfast came in the wake of the latest round of negotiations between Mr Peter Brooke, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, and the two Unionist leaders, Mr James Molyneaux, of the Ulster Unionist Party, and Mr Ian Paisley, of the DUP, in London on Tuesday.

Those talks ended with what observers regarded as an extraordinary display of contention on the part of Mr Molyneaux and Mr Paisley, who described themselves "well satisfied" with the outcome. Mr Molyneaux also talked of a "real prospect of success" and hinted that he had made some headway on the Unionist demand that the Anglo-Irish Secretariat at Maryfield outside Belfast, which serves the Anglo-Irish Conference, be suspended. Yesterday Mr

Molyneaux hinted further, in a brief statement that he and Mr Paisley may now be reaching the end of the exploratory round of talks and were preparing to enter the next phase of bilateral exchanges with the Secretary of State. "We have reached the final meeting in the series and are well satisfied with the result," it said.

However, with all parties to the process including the Irish Government maintaining a strict silence yesterday — itself regarded as highly significant — political circles in Northern Ireland were speculating on what exactly happened in London. Since Mr Brooke began this process in January, with the ultimate aim of securing inter-party talks in Ulster on a future devolved administra-

tion, he has accommodated in turn two pre-conditions laid down by the Unionists. First, he declared publicly that the Government was prepared to consider an alternative to the Anglo-Irish Agreement and second, he agreed that the normal summer gap between meetings of the conference could be defined in advance and utilized as an opportunity to open negotiations.

The stumbling block until Tuesday was the third Unionist demand for a suspension of the workings of the Secretariat, a concession on which the Social Democratic and Labour Party and Dublin are reluctant to give ground because they believe that to do so would be to give the impression that the agreement itself is in jeopardy. Some

observers were speculating that Mr Brooke had made an offer to Mr Molyneaux and Mr Paisley in London which largely satisfied the spirit of their pre-condition even if it fell short of a complete suspension of the Secretariat.

For example, Mr Brooke may have offered, presumably with prior agreement from Dublin, to redeploy one civil servant each from the four-strong Irish and British contingents at Maryfield, while at the same time offering publicly to declare that article 3 of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, which defines the role of the Secretariat, is put on ice during the period that any talks are in progress.

Other observers suggested that the Unionists may even be preparing the ground publicly for a possible collapse of

the process, which they will seek to distance themselves from and blame on the intransigence of Mr Brooke and/or Dublin and the SDLP over their insistence that the Secretariat be suspended. Mr Brooke has impressed politicians of all shades of opinion in Ireland with his careful persistence. As one nationalist politician put it: "He's got the Whitewash touch."

Mr Brooke will now consult the SDLP and Dublin before proceeding. Mr Molyneaux is a convinced integrationist and Mr Paisley will not share power. These are points of principle which do not sit easily with the Government's overall ambition of creating a new devolved government in Northern Ireland.

MPs want fraud check on £8bn jobs training fund

By SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL REPORTER

GOVERNMENT payments totalling £3.8 billion towards running training schemes for the young and unemployed are open to fraud, the Commons public accounts committee said yesterday.

The MPs said that the checks on how managing agents handle public funds fall short even of the Department of Employment's minimum standards and no proper records are kept of known and suspected fraud. The committee was told of suspected cases of corrupt transactions involving false wage claims worth more than £575,000 by those running the projects.

After investigating the training schemes it said: "Financial monitoring was not always accorded high priority and there was a lack of adequately trained staff, with the result that monitoring was frequently not of sufficient depth to substantiate the accuracy of agents' claims. There

are also serious shortcomings in the adequacy and accuracy of some managing agents' records."

After examining training schemes operated by 5,000 managing agents for nearly 700,000 young people and unemployed adults, the committee also expressed dismay at the low number of trainees who went on to find the jobs they had been trained to do on government-sponsored schemes.

For example, only 32 per cent of those training in building and construction work found jobs in that sector between May 1986 and April 1988. The department's latest figures, however, showed that about 86 per cent of those completing Youth Training Scheme got jobs and 64 per cent received qualifications.

The cross-party committee said: "We recognize that well thought-out schemes of training should provide fun-

damental skills that are not too narrowly focused, but we are not convinced that the number of trainees obtaining jobs in sectors other than those for which they have been trained is necessarily a fair reflection on the training provided."

"Thus, while we acknowledge that there have been recent improvements, we remain concerned at the relatively low numbers of trainees who enter occupations related to their training. We consider that one major measure of the success of the department's training schemes should be the extent to which they have provided employers with skilled workers."

A 1988 departmental review found wide variations in the competence and qualifications of managers who were given responsibility for running the training schemes, with many workplace supervisors having little knowledge of the Youth Training Scheme's objectives. But after the initial teething problems, the committee welcomed improvements and hoped it would result in a big rise in trainees receiving qualifications.

"The department acknowledged that ensuring the competence of trainers was a problem in an important area and one where they had started weakly but were becoming very much stronger," the report said.

Only 25 applicants from potential trainers out of 3,184 were rejected. In addition, the department added that half the applicants were given only provisional training status until they improved their standards. A further 166 later withdrew their applications.

The department is setting up 61 accredited training centres across the country, costing about £8 million a year, for instructing the trainers and supervisors. In spite of assurances from officials, the committee called for more regular inspection visits to check on the standard of training being given under the Government's schemes.

The committee also criticized the lack of a "good intelligence system" in many areas training offices about the local jobs available. If a proper overview was carried out, training could be more closely geared to local and national skill shortages.

The new Training and Enterprise Councils will have a soundly based labour market information system to contact. In evidence to the committee, however, department officials said that firms considered their employment needs for only nine to 12 months ahead while the department had to consider equipping young people for a proper career.

The committee discloses that fees are sometimes paid to training managers even when a trainee does not turn up. It complains that details are not kept about unfilled places.

Provision of Training through Managing Agents Committee of Public Accounts 15th Report, Department of Employment (Stationery Office, £7.15)

Scots workers 'on lowest pay'

By a STAFF REPORTER

LOW pay in Scotland is increasing, with almost half the employees in the region earning less than the threshold figure of £4.16 an hour or £157 a week. According to the first annual report of the Scottish Low Pay Unit presented in Edinburgh yesterday, if overtime is excluded the level of low pay "reaches frightening proportions with more than half of them below the threshold for a 37.5-hour week".

Workers are, says the report, "being illegally underpaid but are too afraid of victimization or dismissal to make a complaint against their bosses". The report states that at 33.6 per cent, Scotland is the region with the highest proportion of low paid full-time workers in Britain.

Commenting on the report, Miss Morag Gillespie, the director of the unit, said: "The steady stream of inquiries to the unit has revealed that many workers find themselves in an increasingly vulnerable position. It is totally unacceptable that any workers should feel unable to pursue their legal rights for the want of basic employment protection."

Many of the new jobs being created in the country are in sectors where low pay and poor conditions are commonplace."

Instances of low pay given in the report include a single parent with three children who was working as a cook for £1.98 an hour. She commented: "After I have paid all the bills I cannot even afford shoes for myself."

A security guard on a building site said: "Over the weekend I only get four hours' sleep so by Monday I'm dead. For that I get the princely sum of £2.15 an hour. A relief janitor, aged 52, earning £7.30 for a 40-hour week, said: "I am a registered disabled person. One of my duties is conveying toxic waste on a trolley, including ether and cyanide. I wasn't given any protective clothing; I had to buy it myself."

Another security guard, earning £1.83 an hour for 12-hour shifts — day and night — said: "When complaints are made regarding pay you are told that 'if you don't like it, leave — we can always get someone to do your job'."

Feast of modern art to grace British Library

THE new British Library at St Pancras launched an ambitious £1 million contemporary art scheme yesterday whereby it will be festooned with the art of the 90s (Sarah Jane Checkland writes).

More than a hundred locations within the library, which is due to open in 1993, will be chosen. Mr Michael Smeturst, chairman of the project's selection committee, said: "We want to share with our visitors the splendid collection of art bequeathed to us by earlier generations, as well as seeking out the finest talents

of our own generation."

The Scottish-Italian sculptor Eduardo Paolozzi has already been commissioned to do a large bronze statue of Sir Isaac Newton, which will grace a piazza. The entrance hall will have a huge tapestry taken from a painting by the American-British artist R.B. Kitaj inspired by Newton.

The committee is approaching groups of artists for their ideas for other sites. Mr Richard Luce, Minister for the Arts, has promised support for joint incentive funding.

Provision of Training through Managing Agents Committee of Public Accounts 15th Report, Department of Employment (Stationery Office, £7.15)

Sweet life beats Gibraltar's apes

By JOHN HILL

THE years of peace and package holidays have not been kind to the apes on the Rock of Gibraltar. They muddled through wars and epidemics in an endearingly British way, but overfeeding by tourists has finally demoralized them.

Sated by Smarties and other disastrously addictive treats, the 21-strong Queen's Gate troop is being retired to a walled park set up on heights above the town at a cost of around £100,000. From next week visitors will pay 50p to see these pillars of the old imperial order.

The end of their free-foraging life opens a new chapter in the lively history of the Rock's misnamed apes — they are large tail-less monkeys prop-

erly called Barbary macaques which goes back at least to Nelson's time.

Since 1915 they have been on the roll of the British Army and maintained by it with varying degrees of success. But the Queen's Gate troop, unlike the more remote ones at Middle Hill, has always been in the front line of confrontation with people. However, their control now passes to the Gibraltar government.

Dr John Fa, the Gibraltar director of the park, said: "From the opening of the frontier with Spain in 1984, the apes' situation grew steadily more serious. Three and a half million people a year now come to Gibraltar and many feed them the chocolates and other sweets

they love. The animals are often addicted and obese, with the result that the birth rate has fallen. A male will leave a female on heat to get his supply of Smarties. Degraded individuals lose interest in mating and fight over food. As a result, the population has fallen from 130 to 70."

The yellowish-green apes also bite the hands that feed them. Injuries to visitors have risen from one or two a year to about 70, mostly in summer when the animals are accompanied by young.

A less sugar regimen, mainly of food pellets such as those served at London Zoo, will restore more orderly conduct, Dr Fa believes. Legend holds that if the apes ever leave the Rock then so will the

British: it seems to date from the Great Siege of 1783 when their alarm barks were said to have alerted the garrison to an attack by the Spaniards.

Earlier records refer to "game from Barbary" being imported, probably to be hunted by bored members of the garrison. Macaques were found in southern Europe at the time of the last Ice Age, but if any were in Gibraltar they left no fossils behind. Moorish chroniclers did not mention them as being present.

In North Africa the endangered species has lost much of the cedar and holm oak forest that is its natural habitat, and the International Primate Protection League has endorsed the Gibraltar park project.

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Maguire tests were done by trainee of 18

By RAY CLANCY

A TRAINEE who had just left school carried out sensitive forensic tests which led to the conviction and imprisonment of Mrs Annie Maguire and six others, the inquiry into their cases was told yesterday.

The results of the tests for explosives carried out by Mr David Wyndham at a forensic laboratory in Woolwich, south-east London, were so positive that even the chief scientist was surprised, the third day of the inquiry, headed by Sir John May, was told.

Mr Douglas Higgs, the principal scientific officer in charge of forensic science at the Royal Armouries Research and Development Establishment, where swabs from the Maguires and their house were taken for examination, said the 18-year-old would not have been given the job unless he was capable.

He told the inquiry that Mr Walter Elliott, one of the main prosecution witnesses at the Maguire trial in 1976 and the chemist in charge at the time, would have taken the decision as to who would carry out the tests. Mr Elliott has since died.

Mr Higgs added that at least two senior people would have looked at the tests, which involved comparing samples of suspect swabs with standard samples of four explosives, including nitro-glycerine, the compound widely used by the IRA in the 1970s.

During the tests the operator would look for pink spots appearing at the same speed and density as those of the explosive samples. The swabs taken from the Maguires had shown more spots than had ever been seen before at the laboratory, Mr Higgs said. "Never before had we

seen so many positive on a plate at a reasonably high level of intensity. We just didn't believe it, quite honestly. I have a distinct memory of all those spots and their strength relative to the standard sample. My view at the time was that they contained an appreciable amount of nitro-glycerine."

Asked if it had been possible to double check the tests Mr Higgs said that all the swabs had been used in the original test. "You would have had to decide whether to subdivide and possibly lose all trace or take a chance and use all and get a firm reaction," Mr Higgs said.

Mr Higgs, who retired in 1982, told the inquiry that at the time of the trial he knew of a possibility that other substances could mimic the nitro-glycerine test. He said he was aware of 42,000 compounds of which 1,050 were nitro compounds "which could conceivably give rise to a positive reaction."

He disclosed that in the run-up to the Maguire trial he asked Mr Wyndham to test 200 of them but the vast majority of the compounds were "very obscure" and several had to be made up specially, so he did not feel they could have given rise to positive tests.

The inquiry into the convictions of Mrs Maguire, her husband Patrick, sons Vincent and Patrick, Mrs Maguire's brother Sean Smith, her husband's brother-in-law, Mr Giuseppe Conlon, who died in prison, and Mr Patrick O'Neill, a family friend, continues today.

Conservative fails to find support for his roof tax Bill

AS THE National Executive Committee of the Labour Party approved its policy document yesterday, a Conservative MP made a tongue-in-cheek attempt to hijack one of its reported key proposals — the roof tax.

But his Bill to bring in a version of the tax received no backing and Mr Dennis Skinner, a former chairman of the Labour Party, denied that it was among Labour's plans. "We killed it long before the Tories played their little game today", he told the House.

Mr Neil Hamilton (Tatton, C) seeking to bring in the Roof Tax Bill under the 10-minute-rule procedure, denied rumours that he was being unserious or frivolous and that what he was proposing was a "spoof tax". He was being most serious in seeking

to advance democratic debate and provide alternatives for people to choose between.

No one voted for it, however, and leave was refused by 119 votes to nil. Mr Hamilton said that, because the Labour Party was out of practice in introducing legislation into the House, he had decided to distill his wisdom of the past 12 years and give the Opposition an opportunity to introduce the flagship of their local government proposals.

The Opposition had resolved to change the community charge as soon as it was returned to office. Mr Brian Gould, chief Opposition spokesman on the environment, had said so on many occasions.

He had written to Mr Gould asking for his assistance in drafting the Bill

and for a meeting to discuss tactics, but that had been refused.

Mr Gould had recently moved from his constituency of Dagenham to a flat in the former servants' quarters of an eighteenth-century manor in Moreton-in-the-Marsh. His move was understandable since a roof tax would mean a £711 charge in his constituency compared with the £278 community charge.

In Scotland, there were blocks of flats which had been given a negative valuation. Presumably with a roof tax, residents would be paid to live there. Would the Speaker, residing in the Palace of Westminster, have to put up bed and breakfast signs to meet his enormous roof tax?

It would be simple to avoid the tax of course — by removing the roof.

That would reduce the value of the property considerably.

Mr Edward Leigh (Gainsborough and Hornsby, C), opposing the Bill, said that it was singularly ill conceived.

If he did not know Mr Hamilton better, he would have suspected him of consulting Mr Bryan Gould. Mr Hamilton was an unlikely champion of socialism. Only this week, he had espied him at a society wedding wearing spats and carrying a silver-topped cane.

Mr Hamilton may have brought the proposal forward in a mischievous tone, but it was a serious issue.

How could a tax based on the capital value of a house be fair if the taxpayer — such as a tenant — had no

interest in that value? The proposal was riddled with inconsistencies and fundamentally flawed.

They had still not heard whether Labour's tax would be on individuals or households. Only Labour would produce a tax and then not say who would pay it.

The whole thing was a diversion from what they should be discussing: not the nature of local government tax, but that too much was being charged. Roof tax was a mere smokescreen.

After the result of the division had been announced, Mr Neil Bennett (Pembroke, C) said that Mr Skinner had voted against the Bill. As a roof tax was Labour policy, he should explain his action.

Mr Skinner (Bolsover, Lab) said

that the NEC had never discussed the roof tax. What had taken place was based on a figment of the imagination.

• Earlier, the Conservative owner of a roofless old mill sought ministerial advice on whether he should replace that roof. He was told, however, that he should address his question to the proposers of the roof tax — the Labour Party.

Mr Roger Knapp (Stroud, C) said that the roof of his old mill had fallen in 10 years ago. "Should I repair it or leave it as it is?"

Mr Michael Portillo, Minister for Local Government and Inner Cities, said that it was up to the Labour Party to supply the details of its roof tax, and particularly, to explain who would pay it.

Inquiry into Labour 'spite'

An urgent investigation into alleged acts of spite against Conservative wards by two Labour-controlled councils is being made by Mr Michael Portillo, Minister for Local Government and Inner Cities.

Mr Robert Dean (Dartford, C) asked him during Commons questions to consider legislation to avoid a disgraceful practice by the Labour-controlled councils of Walsall and Bradford whereby people living in Tory wards should receive fewer services and have less money spent on them than those in Labour wards.

Mr Portillo said that he had been so appalled by the allegations that he was examining the matter urgently. He had spoken to Councillor Pickles (who was leader of the former Conservative-controlled Bradford council) and was trying to establish what was going on.

"I urge charge payers in these areas to examine whether they might not already have recourse under the law."

Chope pledge on charge

The Government will set the community charge on empty properties if it finds that local councils do not exercise their discretion properly. Mr Christopher Chope, Under Secretary of State, Environment, said:

He told Mr Timothy Yeo (South Suffolk, C) that the department was writing to local authorities to find out exactly how they were exercising their discretion in charging for empty properties. Councils have discretion to charge from nothing up to double community charge.

If the discretion was not being used sensibly, the Government would have to consider whether to specify the maximum for particular circumstances.

Hope for the elephant

An expert has suggested that prices of ivory overall have fallen so much that poaching in Africa is no longer worthwhile and in some areas may virtually have stopped. Mr David Heathcote-Amory, Under Secretary of State for Environment, said in a written Commons reply. He added the hope that poaching would soon stop in all parts of Africa.

He said that the decision to ban commercial trade in African elephants and elephant products had much reduced demand for ivory.

Cambridge environment

Mr Christopher Patten, the Environment Secretary, confirmed that he believed Cambridge was the best candidate as the base for the new European Environment Agency.

Mr James Paice (South East Cambridgeshire, C) said the Labour council in Cambridge had said it did not want the agency to be based in the city.

Parliament today

Commons (9.30): Spring adjournment debates on various topics. Lords (11): Social Security Bill, committee, third day. Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Bill and Aviation and Maritime Security Bill, third readings.

Haemophiliacs need urgent help, Thatcher told

MRS Thatcher was urged yesterday to appoint a highly respected lawyer to reach an urgent out-of-court settlement with HIV victims who have caught the infection through contaminated blood and blood products

Efficiency advice for the House

SIR Robin Ibbes, who advised the Prime Minister on efficiency and effectiveness in government, is to turn his attention to the organization of the House of Commons.

He will investigate whether it is possible to set up a co-ordinated management and decision-taking structure under the control of the House in place of the present fragmented structure.

Mr Alan Beith, chairman of the House of Commons Commission, announced in a written reply that the commission had decided to set up a review to examine whether the responsibilities for the management of the House and its facilities, at present divided between the commission, the Select Committee on Commons Services, the Department of the Environment and the Leader of the House, could be brought together.

The aim would be to ensure a structure in the Commons that could respond adequately to MPs' needs and demands for services, and determine priorities between them.

Sir Robin had been invited to undertake the work and in due course would advise the commission of his recommendations for change. MPs would be consulted, individually or collectively, through various committees of the House and other bodies, and would be able to make individual representations to Sir Robin.

The House will be advised of the outcome of this review and of any organizational proposals arising therefrom, after Sir Robin Ibbes has tendered his advice to the commission.

The inquiry is expected to last some weeks and Sir Robin may present a report before the end of this session.

HIV INFECTION

administered by the National Health Service.

Speaking during a wide-ranging debate in the Commons, Mr Alfred Morris (Manchester, Wythenshawe, Lab) said that many of the victims had died and many others had scant prospect of living to see a court settlement of their claims.

He had suggested to the Prime Minister that she might follow the precedent he had set as Minister for the Disabled in the 1970s when he appointed Sir Alan Marre to undertake an inquiry into the Thalidomide dispute. At that time Sir Alan had recently retired from the office of Ombudsman. His report later that year settled the dispute.

The Prime Minister might now consider the appointment of Sir Anthony Barrowclough, who had also retired recently as Ombudsman and was highly respected, to do the same job for HIV victims.

Commons debates had drawn attention to cases of children suffering from haemophiliac who had become HIV-positive. In one case, a couple had two sons who contracted HIV. The elder boy had full-blown AIDS and was terminally ill, but their cases were only two of 1,200 in which HIV was confirmed.

"Many of the victims have died and more live with the prospect of an early and most painful death in direct consequence of treatment they were given under the NHS."

Justice for many of the victims would be posthumous — which was not justice at all.

He was told there was not a precise parallel with the Thalidomide case, but the Thalidomide issue did involve severely disabled people who were trying against mostly hopeless odds to achieve justice through the courts. The same applied to the present dispute.

The increasing number of deaths among people with AIDS due to contaminated blood made an out-of-court settlement all the more pressingly urgent.

Earlier in the debate, Sir Barney Hayhoe (Brentwood and Oxted, C) (right), a former Minister for Health, called for emergency funds during this financial year to prevent the closure of National Health Service beds and operating theatres.

The House will be advised of the outcome of this review and of any organizational proposals arising therefrom, after Sir Robin Ibbes has tendered his advice to the commission.

The inquiry is expected to last some weeks and Sir Robin may present a report before the end of this session.



Peers concern for human rights

HOUSE OF LORDS

THE incorporation of the European Convention on Human Rights into British law found favour on all sides of the Lords during a debate on civil liberties.

Lord Hutchinson of Lullingstone (Lib Dem) said that more cases had been upheld in the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg against Britain than against any other country.

He told peers that the "long trek to a foreign jurisdiction to find the sustenance of justice must surely be a matter of shame to this Government".

Injustices had involved contempt of court, data protection, prison rules, immigration, corporal punishment, mental patients' rights, children in care, official secrets, homosexuality and the closed shop.

More than 100 important changes to regulations and administrative practices affecting citizens' civil rights had resulted from decisions made in Strasbourg.

The only way forward now was the incorporation of the European convention into British law, as every other European country had done.

Lord Alexander of Weedon (C) said: "Society increasingly comprises minorities whose interests might not have enough widespread appeal or, to put it crudely, sufficient voting pull for them to be effectively protected in Parliament".

Nobody could get to the court at Strasbourg until they had exhausted local remedies. British judges were far better judges of what did or did not apply in the British context.

"Therefore I would be glad to see the European convention, subject to the sovereignty of Parliament, incorporated into the British system."

Lord Alexander of Weedon (C) said: "Society increasingly comprises minorities whose interests might not have enough widespread appeal or, to put it crudely, sufficient voting pull for them to be effectively protected in Parliament".

Opening the debate, Lord Irvine of Lairg (Lab) said that a sustained feature of this Administration had been its obsession with government secrecy and national security to the prejudice of traditional freedoms.

Viscount Ullswater, for the Government, said that safeguards already existed in British legislation and in far more precise terms than in the European convention.

That was no reflection on the impartiality of the judiciary but a reaffirmation that it was for Parliament, in the exercise of its sovereignty, to decide.

MPs issue two more attacks on poverty figures

By SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL REPORTER

GOVERNMENT statistics are camouflaging the true extent of poverty in Britain since the 1988 social security reforms by underestimating the number of families living under the income support level, a committee of MPs said yesterday.

In a fresh challenge to the official figures, the House of Commons social services committee published two further studies by the Institute of Fiscal Studies into the effect of replacing supplementary benefit with income support and into the regional differences in levels of income.

The first institute study forced the Government to change the way it draws up its poverty figures by disproving the "trickle-down" theory; that theory asserts that the poorest sections of society benefit from the greater prosperity of the better-off.

The new analysis shows that nearly four million families, covering 3.7 million people, are not receiving benefits even though their net resources put them below the income support line.

He added: "Against all expectations, the transfer from supplementary benefit to income support resulted in a marked fall in the numbers claiming, from 8.2 million claimants in May 1987 to 7.4 million in 1988".

House of Commons Social Services Committee — Households and Families below average income: A Regional Analysis (Stationery Office, £7.15).

House of Commons Social Services Committee — Income Support System and the Distribution of Income in 1987 (Stationery Office, £3.45).

Call for pensions lead by ministers

RETIREMENT

If the decision were to be to allow everyone to retire at 60 without loss of pension rights, that would need additional investment by the Government of £3.2 billion. At the least, the time had come for the Government to produce proposals.

• Later in the same debate, Mr Geoffrey Lofthouse (Pontefract and Castleford, Lab) said that if the mining industry was to continue to run down, there was an obligation on the Government to assist in providing alternative employment for those thrown out of work.

The announcement by Sir Robert Haslam, chairman of British Coal, that a further 7,000 jobs could be lost to the industry over the next three years, was a continuation of the huge reduction in the workforce.

One of the worrying features of this trend was that the average age of miners was also coming down; it was now 33. If these young men were to lose their jobs, there was little hope they would be able to find work without some help.

The Government must grasp the

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Rail strikes sidetrack Solidarity economic reforms

From ROGER BOYES
IN WARSAW

THE Solidarity-led Government, confronted with wildcat strikes paralysing Poland's rail system, is facing the most serious threat so far to its market-oriented economic reforms.

Full-scale negotiations between the Government, which includes many strike organizers from the 1980s, and the rail workers will be held today, though ministers are urging the three dozen railmen still on hunger strike to abandon their fast first.

Commenting on the moral dilemma of the new East European democracies, the Solidarity Cabinet is dealing with strikers, the Government spokeswoman, Miss Małgorzata Niezabitowska, declared yesterday: "Hunger strikes are an instrument against a totalitarian state, where all strikes are illegal. But now these workers have a right to strike — once all other legal means have been exhausted. Would it be democratic to

yield to the pressure of a hunger strike?" The striking railway workers, mainly from western Poland, are demanding wage increases and a complete overhaul of the railway administration. "Increasing wages for the railwaymen would lead to higher fares," said the Government's chief economic adviser, Dr Waldemar Kuczyński. "That in turn would drive up inflation. It would be a signal for other workers and ultimately threaten the whole Government programme."

The dispute represents more than the first skirmish in the industrial relations of the new East European democracies. It is part of a fundamental argument about the pace of change in the post-communist states. Mr Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the Solidarity Prime Minister, is operating what might be termed a "steered democracy", sharing power with the remnants of the old regime and advancing step-by-step politically. By contrast, Mr Lech Wałęsa, the newly re-

elected chairman of Solidarity, favours an acceleration of politics, taking its cue from the grassroots. Mr Wałęsa is speaking to that part of the population which wants to clear out any remaining communists, and make a restoration impossible.

His political calculation is that Mr Mazowiecki's demands for long-haul economic sacrifices will eventually suck dry the popularity of the Solidarity-led Government. New sources of legitimacy have thus to be found, even if that means a chaotic "cultural revolution".

The effect has been to undermine Mr Mazowiecki's Government, since it depends heavily on presenting an image of social calm to Western investors. The Solidarity union's praesidium, chaired by Mr Wałęsa, was openly critical of the Government on Tuesday, though it also distanced itself from the strikers. It demanded that the Government send a team to Gdańsk to talk to the union

leadership. Yesterday the Government refused. The impression given by Mr Wałęsa's advisers is that Mr Mazowiecki is now heading a kind of "Krebsky administration", an interregnum between two stages of a revolution.

The fact is that Mr Wałęsa has gauged the extent of worker unrest in Poland better than the Government of Mr Mazowiecki. The rail workers will certainly be followed by other groups — perhaps even the miners — as unemployment creeps up to the half million mark, the poverty belt grows and old age pensions shrink.

The failure of the IMF-backed economic reform to produce quick results will encourage the leftists in Solidarity to make common cause with the survivors from the communist party. The reforms would then be watered down and Solidarity would squander its political capital. The Solidarity leader is, then, anticipating events, pushing the Prime

Minister, but not so hard that he topples. He hopes for the emergence of two main political groupings in the next few months: a centre-right that would continue the Solidarity strand of national independence, and a centre-left that would preserve the social democratic traditions of the union movement.

Solidarity appears to have served its historical purpose as a dismantler of communism; its aim now is to be an umbrella organization until political parties take proper shape. Perhaps within a year, Solidarity can confine itself to pure trade union activities.

Local council elections, due on Sunday, are an important move, the first completely free postwar elections in Poland, since the national poll last June reserved a chunk of seats for communists. The rail strikes have embittered the atmosphere ahead of the council elections. Ordinary voters are confused, frequently having to choose between lists

of citizens' committees — broadly speaking Solidarity but including many different political orientations — extreme right-wingers and ecologists who sometimes also include former communists among their candidates.

Ideally the polls would be a vote of confidence on the market reforms of the present Government. But the council elections, effectively a handover of power from the central state to town councils, do not provide this opportunity. The strikes give a more precise sounding of the mood in the country.

Mr Mazowiecki plans national and presidential elections next spring. However, Mr Wałęsa thinks that is too long for the workers to wait, that only immediate political radicalization can really support the pain of market reform. Even the left-wingers in Solidarity, who have been quietly waiting for the IMF-sponsored economic policies to stumble, are now gripped by panic.

Gorbachov lectures Yeltsin on socialism

Moscow
PRESIDENT Gorbachov accused Mr Boris Yeltsin, the populist politician, yesterday of abandoning socialist principles and trying to "ex-communicate" Russia from its socialist roots.

Mr Gorbachov was addressing the Russian parliament during a debate on "sovereignty", or expanding the economic and social powers of Russia, the largest of the country's 15 republics. The debate will be followed by the election of the Russian president.

Mr Yeltsin, who has attacked Mr Gorbachov for pursuing reform too timidly, spoke to the parliament on Tuesday. He is standing for president, but is thought to be a long shot against Mr Aleksandr Vlasov, the Russian Prime Minister, who has Mr Gorbachov's backing.

Mr Gorbachov said Mr Yeltsin's address on Tuesday, in which he had blamed Russia's economic ills on centralism, had been tantamount to "an appeal for a collapse of the Union" under the cloak of sovereignty and was a recipe for confrontation. Mr Gorbachov told more than 1,000 deputies that Mr Yeltsin's speech represented "an attempt to excommu-

nicate Russia from socialism". "There was not a single mention of the word 'socialism'. Even the words 'Soviet' and 'socialist' disappeared from Yeltsin's name for the republic."

"For us Russians, for all peoples of our country, 'the socialist choice', 'the power of the soviets', are not just phrases. These are our fundamental values, our benchmarks." He said Mr Yeltsin's call for sovereignty to extend to individuals, factories and local councils "takes the question to the absurd and would in any case lead to anarchy, to parochialism".

In his speech on Tuesday, Mr Yeltsin had said Russia's dire economic difficulties were "the fault of the imperial policies of the centre. All the damage was done by the central administrative system." A former junior member of the Communist Party Politburo, hugely popular among ordinary Russians, he called for "real economic and political sovereignty".

Mr Gorbachov, who spoke to the parliament at the request of deputies, dismissed the notion that five years of perestroika reforms had been "nothing but a mistake" and gave an oblique warning. "Discussions often take on a politicized character," he said. "The balance of forces can clearly be seen, as can political games to take over power. I think we have to be careful with this. There should be fewer political rallies and more, deeper analysis."

He offered his support for the principle of sovereignty for Russia, adding that the Soviet Union was "inconceivable without Russia". Most deputies, including Mr Vlasov, have spoken in favour of sovereignty, emphasizing that Russia did not receive adequate compensation for its contribution to the Soviet economy.

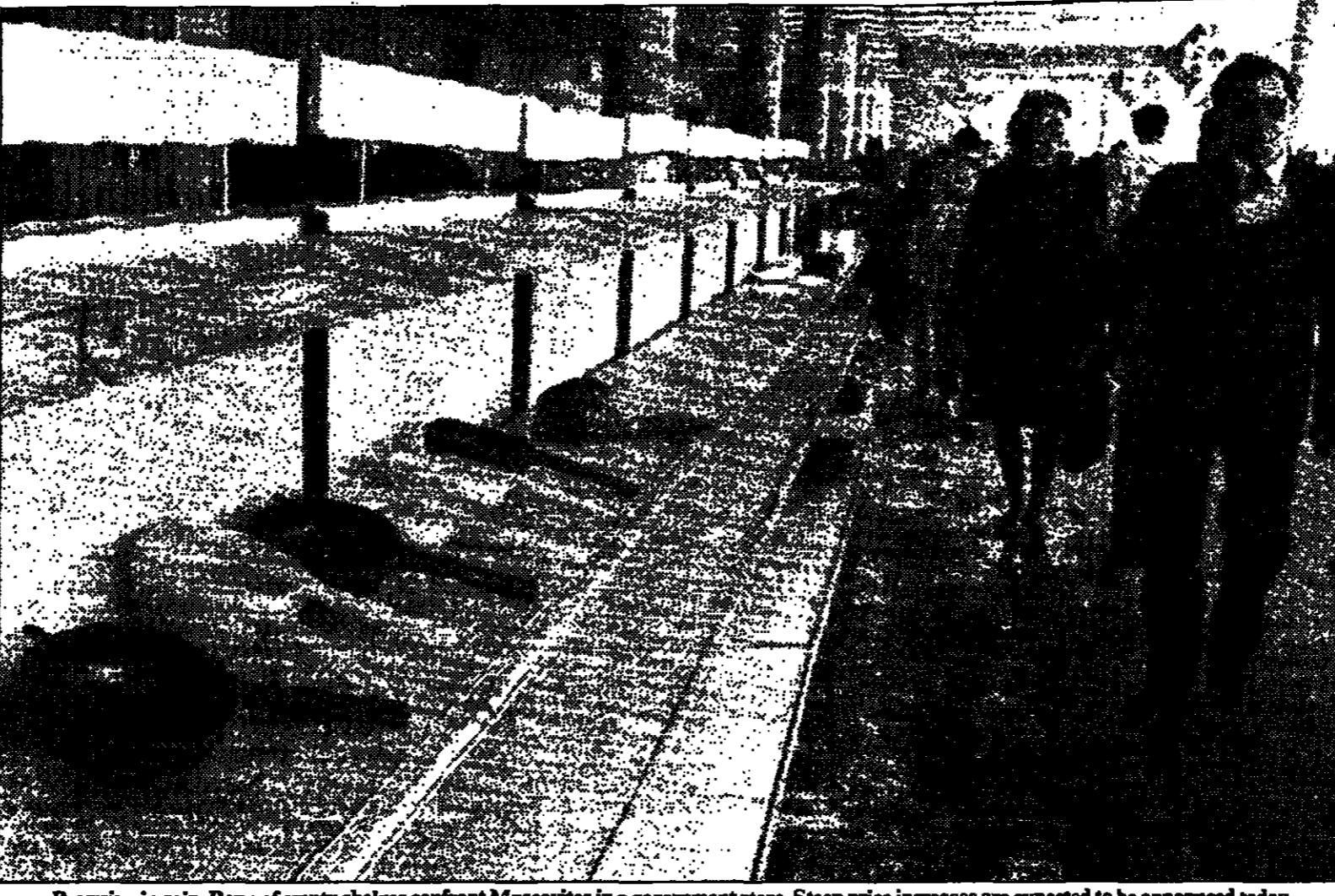
Strike called off: Russian workers in Estonia called off a strike against the republic's independence declaration yesterday after an appeal from President Gorbachov.

A spokesman for the organizing committee said the three-day-old strike, which has almost closed the republic's main port, disrupted transport and closed factories, had been called off indefinitely and would end this morning.

Speaking from the rebel republic's capital, Tallinn, he said: "We received a message from President Gorbachov expressing support for and solidarity with our struggle but asking us, in connection with the serious economic situation in the country, to call the strike off."

However, he added: "If the supreme soviet of the republic or the government take further measures to aggravate the situation, we reserve the right to resume it at any moment." (Reuters)

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Browsing in vain: Rows of empty shelves confront Muscovites in a government store. Steep price increases are expected to be announced today

Iliescu is shadowed by spectre of party past

From CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN BUCHAREST

MR ION Iliescu, the former Communist Party apparatchik due to be named tomorrow as the next President of Romania, is the least charismatic but most controversial of the new breed of leaders to emerge from the recent upheavals in Eastern Europe.

His claims, after an electoral landslide of embarrassing proportions, to be about to seize Romania on a path towards Swedish-style social democracy have been rejected by the demonstrating students who dismiss him as a reformed Communist in the Gorbachov mould.

At the age of 60, Mr Iliescu was the youngest of the three presidential candidates and the only one to have lived all his adult life in Romania. His Soviet ties are so deep that Western intelligence experts are convinced that he was head-hunted for the task of replacing Ceausescu by President Gorbachov himself.

Mr Iliescu flatly denies the suggestion that he was a close friend of Mr Gorbachov during their shared student days in Moscow where he spent

five years studying at the Molotov Institute, the leading party-cadre training school.

His denials are dismissed by many intellectuals as being part of recent efforts to distance himself from his Soviet background. The conviction of many of his opponents that he is little more than a Soviet puppet, installed by a coup disguised as a revolution, has dominated much of the post-electoral criticism. It has failed to upset the great majority of ordinary Romanians.

Since taking charge of the provisional Government, caution has been Mr Iliescu's watchword. Despite his intellectual ebullience he is not regarded as having the breadth of political imagination necessary to solve Romania's pressing problems. Having initially hinted that he would pull the country out of the Warsaw Pact, he announced publicly after Sunday's vote that he would now be keeping it in.

Those close to the President-elect claim that many aspects of the administration have run since the revolution are based on strict communist lines. That is not surprising for a man who was scarcely 14 when he joined the Union of Young Communists and continued a long party career, which only ended in 1984 when he was removed from the Central Committee.

While supporters emphasized his differences with Ceausescu, critics note his long membership of the nomenklatura. He was for 10 years a non-voting member of the Politburo and also a full member of the Central Committee, minister, a leading member of the party's propaganda department and at one time, Ceausescu's chosen successor. It was only in 1987 that his disgrace became absolute.

But as the election results give him around 85 per cent of the vote, this failed to move an electorate determined to see him as the hero of the December revolution.

• **Currie challenged:** Another British observer of the Romanian election yesterday disputed Mrs Edwina Currie's view that it was fair (Andrew McEwen writes).

Mrs Jessica Douglas-Home, whose late husband, Charles, was a former editor of the *Times*, said that Mrs Currie's opinion cut across the findings of a more experienced team of observers. She was one of three Britons among 60 observers sent by the US National Republican Institute and the National Democratic Institute. They found that the poll was "not consistent with a democracy", after making observations in 12 regions.

• **Before the election there was intimidation, harassment and a very high degree of control by the Government,** she said.

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Mr Iliescu: Apparatchik in the Gorbachov mould

Letters, page 13

Nato to lower state of alert

From MICHAEL EVANS IN BRUSSELS

NATO defence ministers agreed in Brussels yesterday that the state of readiness and availability of some of the alliance's standing forces in Central Europe could be lowered for the first time since the beginning of the Cold War.

Yesterday's communiqué said further "substantial" reductions and adjustments are to be made in military training programmes. "This will reduce the impact on the public, will benefit the quality of life and protect the environment," the communiqué said.

Nato sources said the cutback in training involves the cancellation of 10 exercises. A further 22 would be merged and 22 reduced. Nato's repair bills for damaged German farmland would be cut by \$21 million (£13 million) a year.

It was confirmed, too, that the 3 per cent annual rise in defence spending was now regarded as "no longer appropriate".

Mr Cheney also said yesterday that stocks of US nuclear artillery shells in West Germany have had to be repaired urgently because of doubts about safety standards. However, he rebutted a claim in *The Washington Post* that the "defective" W79 shells could have exploded.

Mr Cheney said the safety scare had arisen before he had been appointed Defence Secretary, although he had been able to check the records. The problem was first discovered in 1988. Mr Cheney said that the US maintained very high safety standards and the W79 had failed to meet those standards.

The nuclear shells, which are fired from 203 mm (8 inch) howitzers, are stocked in West Germany, Italy and The Netherlands. Detonated in wartime, they would deliver a minimum 2.5 kiloton nuclear yield. The report in *The Washington Post* claimed the warhead would produce a 10 kiloton yield, two-thirds of the force of the 1945 Hiroshima bomb.

The critics are angry that Mr Baker bowed to Soviet demands that the treaty cover all air-launched nuclear-tipped cruise missiles with a range of more than 375 miles. The original American position was 930 miles.

They say the Russians upstaged clear US priorities by moving on a strategic deal ahead of a much more important conventional arms agreement.

Striptease a boom industry in unshackled East Germany

From IAN MURRAY IN BONN

WHILE East German industry awaits the onslaught of capitalism with apprehension, one new home-grown business is on the way to market viability without need for subsidy or start-up money. Erotic shows, although still banned by the old communist constitution, are bursting out all over.

According to Herr Lothar Voigt, who runs the Spree Cabaret underneath the Palast der Republik, where the Volkskammer meets, "the demand is huge". He opened the first, not very naughty striptease show in East Germany 11 years ago, but in more recent years, clubs have skirting the law by staging "fashion shows" at which the "models" showed less and less clothing and more and more girls.

Brussels had already put out a directive in 1979 to preserve Europe's birds — a vain attempt to stop the wholesale slaughter of migratory birds as they fly over Italy. Community law gave any member a full right to insist on even stricter protection measures. But this could not be used to prevent the free trade in food, especially if it was food legally available in another country.

for DM 100 (£35), are much in demand, and the 100 or so cabarettes where they appear are overbooked. The girls are also being snapped up by Western cabaret owners.

Worried that the export models will leave the home market bare, Herr Voigt is forming a lobby called the Sex League, to campaign to legalize erotic shows and make it formally.

Meanwhile, West Germany's most experienced and successful sex shop chain is already serving thousands of East German mail-order clients with items from its range of more than 2,000 pleasure-promoting devices. Legally, such items cannot be sent through the East German post, but since January Frau Beate Uhse has been

fulfilling the orders which have been pouring in, because it was found that the postal authorities were doing nothing to interfere with the packets.

Fran Uhse was born in East Prussia 70 years ago in what is now part of the Soviet Union. She built up her sex shop empire when, as a young refugee, she found so many people seeking advice and help about contraception and other sexual problems.

At a time when bartenders, rather than money was the norm, she sold her first advice sheets for 4lb of butter. She opened her first sex shop in 1962 and today employs 550 people to run 46 shops and stores and 15 cinemas with an annual turnover of DM 107 million.

She started out offering an

exchange rate of one Deutschmark for three Ostmarks, but found this was uneconomic and amended this to one for five. Already she has done over DM 600,000 worth of business at these rates.

She is poised to spread her empire eastwards as soon as economic union makes it possible for her to set up a business there.

For the moment her East German clients have to find out what she has on offer from free mini-catalogues handed out from caravans by the three sales teams she has already based in the East.

West Germany, despite a plentiful supply of sex shops and the erotic, has had the world's lowest birth rate for some time, with each woman producing an average of just 1.28 children — roughly five babies for each four mothers.

Better obstetrics and gynaecology make it safer for older women to have babies. For all the

wanted babies, there are still about 90,000 abortions a year in West Germany, even though technically it is illegal. The rules are more liberal in East Germany and this threatens to be one of the most difficult areas to "harmonize" as the reunification goes ahead.

• **EAST BERLIN:** East Germany's new non-communist government is dismissing 550 professors of Marxism-Leninism. Political upheavals have made the subject no longer compulsory.

Head teachers of almost 6,700 high schools, who had to be Communist Party members under the government ousted last year, are also losing their jobs in a clear-out "to promote democratic renewal in the education system", the Education Ministry "said yesterday. (Reuters)

good. Religion must play a key church shall be judged by our church to voice its support.

Arafat wants UN troops 'to protect' Palestinians

By OUR FOREIGN STAFF

is would be a vote of market reform of the central state to provide this opportunity to give a more market-oriented government. But the country is a handover to the former communists.

At the same time, the official Middle East News Agency in Cairo reported that President Bush had assured Egypt that the United States would reopen its doors to Soviet Jews in a bid to defuse Arab anger over immigration to Israel.

"Arafat will ask for protection for Palestinians in the occupied territories and for international intervention," said Mr Arafat, a PLO representative in The Netherlands. "(He) will ask for the withdrawal of all Israeli forces now from the occupied territories and ask to send UN peacekeeping forces for an interim period."

The Security Council is due to hear Mr Arafat during a debate after an eruption of Arab violence, not only in the occupied territories but in Israel itself and Jordan. The Security Council has agreed to meet in Geneva, rather than in New York, so that the United States does not have to make a politically sensitive decision about whether to grant a visa to Mr Arafat.

Arab sources indicated that the United States had agreed not to block a plan to send a UN mission to the area, although Israel is expected to object. Mr Moshe Arens, the Israeli Foreign Minister, yesterday rejected criticism by President Bush and the European Community over Israel's handling of the violence that broke out after the killing of seven Palestinians by a Jewish gunman.

The critics had accused Israeli troops of using excessive force to put down the riots. They also say Israel has created hostility in the region by failing to peace negotiations under way.

"We have heard people trying to make a connection between the tragedy at Rishon le Zion and the political process and the policies of the Israeli Government," Mr Arens said. "I think it should be clear to any well-meaning person that there is no such connection." Mr Arens said Israeli troops "acted in an exemplary manner" in dealing with the violence.

Only scattered incidents were reported in the occupied lands yesterday as the Army continued its 24-hour curfew on most of the territory's 1.7 million Palestinian residents. Between Sunday and Tuesday night, 13 Palestinians were shot and killed by Israeli troops. At least three people died in rioting in Jordan.

The casualties drew an unusually strong comment from the White House. Mr Martin Fitzwater, the White House Press Secretary, said that Mr Bush had sent personal condolences to the families of all those killed in the Sunday attack and the subsequent

Singapore, which compared with Asian neighbours like Bangkok, Bombay or Tokyo is no more than an automotive village, claims it has more cars per mile of road than Britain. But that is a statement about the smallness of the nation rather than about the state of its streets: it rarely has the jams we regard as routine. What makes the true contrast is the difference between their willingness to tackle the future and our own attitude.

The means Singapore has used until now have included a levy on all car imports of a soaring 175 per cent (thus a £10,000 Japanese saloon is a £27,500 luxury by the time it leaves the docks), an annual Registration Disc that can cost up to £1,500, and a system of



Women brandishing an automatic rifle and stones during a demonstration by at least 8,000 Palestinians and Lebanese in Muslim west Beirut yesterday in which they demanded revenge for the Arabs killed in Israel

Fresh hope for Cambodia deal

By ANDREW McEWEN, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

THE five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council are to hold talks on Cambodia tomorrow amid signs that a solution to the civil war may be in sight.

Diplomatic sources described the prospects as "better than they have been for a long time".

Radio Thailand said yesterday that the four warring factions in Cambodia had agreed to sign a ceasefire soon. It quoted Mr Chatichai Choonhavan, the Thai Prime Minister, as saying an agreement was certain. His comments followed a meeting with Mr Nguyen Co Thach, Foreign Minister of Vietnam.

Mr Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Phnom Penh Government, and Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the former Cambodian head of state, have said they will attend talks in Tokyo on June 4 and 5. While the factions have gone back on ceasefire agreements in the past and Prince Sihanouk has frequently changed his mind, there was a willingness in principle among the five to back such a solution.

The meeting of the five in New York tomorrow and Saturday may lead to the reconvening of a 19-nation peace conference in Paris, which ended in deadlock last year. The British Government hopes that progress will be made before September, in time to avert an embarrassing diplomatic decision over who should be the United Nations' seat at the United Nations.

A report by a UN fact-finding mission to Cambodia has encouraged the British Government to believe that an international solution is feasible. The five – the US, the Soviet Union, China, Britain and France – reached a provisional agreement in January on a 16-point plan for a UN-supervised interim government and elections in Cambodia. But there were many doubts at the time that it would work.

These have been eased by the findings of a team sent earlier this month by the UN Secretary-General's special representative on South-East Asia. The plan, a modified version of an earlier Australian proposal, depends on persuading the Phnom Penh

Colonel dies in Manila ambush

Manila SUSPECTED communist guerrillas killed a Philippine colonel and four other people yesterday in an ambush here, a military spokesman said.

Witnesses said the gunmen used the bus as cover when they opened fire on the colonel's car, which went out of control and collided with the bus. They said the gunmen kept firing at the stalled car.

Later, about 50 members and supporters of the urban guerrilla death squad blamed for the attack held a brief rally in the centre of the capital to mark the sixth anniversary of the group's founding. They unfurled large streamers and banners calling for "insurrection" and support for "armed partisan warfare".

Colonel Reynaldo Dino, deputy chief for personnel of the paramilitary constabulary, was driving to work when the guerrillas sprayed his car with automatic rifle fire. His two bodyguards and his daughter, who was in her late twenties, were also killed. A woman passenger in a passing bus was also killed. Ten other people on the bus, including the driver, were wounded in the attack by six gunmen in the Manila suburb of Caloocan. The gunmen fled by car after the attack, police said.

The ambush occurred on the eve of the founding anniversary of the Alex Boncaya Brigade, a communist death squad that has killed more than 100 soldiers and policemen in the Philippine capital during the past two years. The group was organized by the communist New People's Army.

The ambush was the latest sign of the deteriorating security in the capital as the rebels step up their fight to overthrow the Government. The Cabinet decided yesterday to ask Congress to extend the President's emergency powers by six months. The additional powers were granted after last December's coup attempt. (Reuters, AP)

The military in Burma head off opposition

From NEIL KELLY IN BANGKOK

THE Burmese military regime has cut the production of the traditional peasant hats made from bamboo, on the ground that they are made from products of the threatened rain forests; but the move is being seen as a way of preventing their use as anti-government symbols in the elections on Sunday.

The peasant hat is the election symbol of the leading opposition party, the National League for Democracy, many of whose supporters have taken to wearing the National Unity Party's rice stalks around their ankles or in their shoes as a gesture of contempt for the party favoured by the military regime.

Only six of the 93 parties participating in Burma's first multi-party election for 30 years are serious contenders. The election, which is intended to improve Burma's international image, is taking place in an atmosphere of secrecy and fear. Voters will go to the polls under martial law and a night curfew. There is no freedom of assembly or speech and all campaign statements are checked in advance by official censors.

Mild criticism of the previous military government is permitted, but not of the existing regime. No complete list of candidates has been published, and after the voting the winners' names – but no other polling details – will be made known. The Government, which controls all the media, is running a virulent campaign against anti-military parties, propaganda which one foreign ambassador said "makes Dr Goebbels look like Billy Graham".

Citizens are advised not to vote, because they are told "democracy does not work". Many of the half-million people forcibly removed from their homes to new areas recently will not be able to vote because they are on no electoral roll.

Most of the key figures in the election are not visible. General Ne Win, the dictator for 26 years, is retired officially and has not been seen for 14 months, but still has the last word on the big issues. The best known opposition leaders, U Nu, the former Prime Minister, and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the National League for Democracy, are under house arrest and banned from the election.

The report warned Burmese that they risk seven years in jail for failing to report an act of treason. (Reuters)

Singapore auctions right to a car

From BRIAN JAMES
IN SINGAPORE

THE citizens of Mr Lee Kuan Yew's Singapore cannot assume anything, even the right to own a car. Faced with the inexorable rise in ownership and the inevitability of the island republic choking on an over-rich diet of too many cars, the Prime Minister has just begun making Singaporeans bid against each other for what will be the privilege of car ownership.

London drivers milling around Mr Lee during his visit this week are acutely aware that the only promise made by our experts is that by the year 2025 Britain will have twice as many vehicles competing for space on the country's roads.



Taxed curb: An area of Singapore restricted to permit-holders during rush hours

Restricted Zones into which you may not drive without payment for another piece of windscreen paper of £30 per month – £60 for company cars. But this month has seen the arrival of the most costly document yet.

From May 1, no Singaporean may buy a new car without a Certificate of Entitlement to Purchase. He obtains such a certificate only by taking part in a cut-throat auction against his fellow citizens.

Predictably, the plan provoked outrage, even among the compliant Singaporeans. On top of other taxes and levies, in addition to swinging fines on jay-walkers and litter-droppers, this was seen as going too far. The measure was prepared to pay to own one of them."

But would not this system mitigate against the lower-paid? "A little, but we have fine public transport." The scheme works this way: each quarter the Government works out how many new cars it can permit in Singapore (based on numbers scrapped and road progress) and allocates so many certificates to the four classes of private car, goods vehicles and motorcycles. Would-be owners get a form and make their bid.

In this first quarter, Singapore is to permit 14,000 new vehicles. In the family car category 8,944 citizens bid for 4,583 certificates. The highest bid was more than £4,000, the lowest 33p. Officials counted from the top and the 4,583rd best bid was £1,007. As the lowest successful bid, this set a price for all certificates sold in this category.

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Justice seen to be undone

P.A.J. Waddington

The likelihood that the Maguire family will have their convictions retrospectively quashed, coming in the wake of other scandals during recent months, calls into question the entire criminal justice system.

At the centre of that system is the adversarial approach to evidence – on the face of it, a sensible way of exposing flaws in the opposition's case. Surrounding the accused with various safeguards is supposed to minimize the conviction of the innocent. In actuality the criminal trial is a parody of truth-seeking, akin to the Mad Hatter's tea-party, in which discovering the truth is subordinated to winning.

As anyone who has given evidence in a criminal trial will know, the one thing that one is not allowed to do is "tell it like it was". The inevitable jumble of experience, impressions and feelings are required to be laid out with precision for clinical examination.

Having once given evidence in a motoring case in which a lorry had crossed a red light and hit a car behind which I had been travelling, I met a colleague who had heard my testimony. He remarked that, according to his calculations, I testified that the lorry was travelling at 400 miles an hour and stopped on a sixpence. Such a ridiculous conclusion arose from being asked a series of highly specific questions which effectively divorced experience from evidence.

Cross-examination seizes upon detailed inconsistencies and contradictions in an attempt to discredit testimony. Since the burden of proof is "beyond a reasonable doubt", uncertainty or ambiguity – the very essence of daily experience – are intolerable in court. The aim is not to find out how much or in which respects testimony can be relied upon. It is a zero-sum game in which evidence must be accepted as wholly true or worthless.

The jury, too, is placed in the impossible position of determining guilt on grounds that defy common sense. The choice they are offered is bizarre: not "what, if anything, did the accused do?", but "did the accused do what the prosecution alleges he did?". The possibility of concluding, as might a reasonable person listening to the evidence, that the accused is not guilty as charged but is guilty of something else, is not allowed.

Moreover, this is a decision that must be made "beyond a reasonable doubt": any doubt that the accused may not have committed the offence renders the entire prosecution case null and void. All the while the one person who knows most – the accused – is uniquely allowed to remain silent.

In making its decision the jury is not permitted to have at its disposal information which in any other situation would assist valid decision-making. Hearsay evi-

...and moreover

CLEMENT FREUD

What is this that this is? I asked the waiter in French, pointing to the menu item *Le Filet de Rock ou Fumet des Legumes en Vin Blanc £12.95*, in which I had understood all the words except Rock. He said it was a fish, a fish of Provence that came from the rocks and crevices of the sea. "Funny Freud didn't know that," I overheard a man tell another down the table.

Oh all right, I said, I'll have it – adding that Rock was not a French fish I had ever encountered. He gave me a look that waiters reserve for customers who get less than seven out of 10 in pescology.

It was a serious restaurant: all the waiters spoke English with strong French accents – even the ones who came from Stockport – and for the first five minutes they played out the full repertoire of their profession: took away the plate and the knife and the fork behind which the six of us had been seated; removed the large glasses and brought small ones; slid the napkins out of the napkin rings, smoothed the linen, placed them in our laps and took away the rings, possibly to a safe deposit box at a Swiss bank. Later they came back with menus, suggested aperitifs and, at the host's behest, I was given the wine list. I chose the more expensive of two Sancerres.

At length, the wine waiter returned with a nicely chilled bottle of the less expensive Sancerre, gave it to me to inspect, grudgingly agreed that it was veritably not the Sancerre that I had ordered, and replaced it with the right one at room temperature. His cousin, the while, was presenting the bread basket, taking innocent delight in giving guests the bread roll most distantly removed from that to which they had pointed.

A serious restaurant, then, in which the wine is poured to fill one-seventh of the glass, whereafter the waiter removes the bottle to a distant wine-bucket. This forces customers to ask for more wine, to which entreaty the sommelier replies, "It is not trouble", and dispenses another thimble-full all round

to make everyone appreciate the importance of the man's presence to the overall enjoyment of the repast.

The place was as full as such places deserve to be – like not – and an hour and 10 minutes after our arrival one noticed the change in the pace of the staff's movement, which denotes the imminent arrival of the main course. Our six covered plates, having been identified on the sideboard, were now placed before us, and the most senior of the serving people, she who must have been at least 20 years old, gave a flicker of an eyebrow and the half-dozen silver cloches were simultaneously lifted to display the content of the *œuvres du maître chef de cuisine* – in my case a rather greyish looking piece of *scyliorhinus stellaris*, a sub-species of shark known as lesser-spotted dog-fish (dog-fish as the fish hunt in packs), often called rock salmon or rock eel by socially ambitious fish and chip shops such as encourage their clientele to wear yachting caps.

On returning home I browsed among my French cookery books for signs of "rock". Larousse, which proclaims to be the ultimate authority, moves smoothly from Robert, Sauce, to Rognons de Veau, Ecöffier, mentions it not, nor Curnonsky, Elizabeth David in a chapter on Mediterranean Fish remarks that rock-salmon can be used as an alternative to real fish, and wise Tom Stobart, whom I respect above all other culinary experts, writes of what the *Auberge de Provence* in Buckingham Gate, London SW1, called "rock": "There are few serious recipes for dog-fish, though in Germany the belly-tips are considered a delicacy."

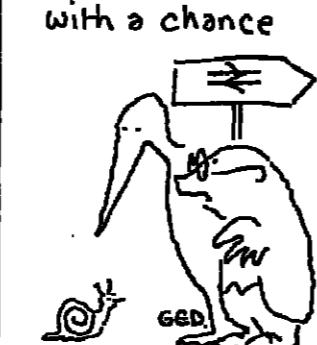
It is not a matter about which one would make a major scene, but there is something fundamentally rotten about a French restaurant setting up an offshoot in England, buying the cheapest fish in Billingsgate and selling it back to us enveloped in French words, without even the courtesy of Frenchification – as they do in *Le Bistek avec Pouding Yorkaise*.

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I think he's in with a chance



Robin Oakley talks to the SDP leader about his plans for the general election

Dr Owen hints at a return to Labour

Dr David Owen yesterday offered broad support for the Labour policy review and signalled that he might yet endorse Neil Kinnock's party at the next election as one to which Social Democrats could safely return. While the SDP leader said there was no question of his ever joining the Conservative Party, he refused to rule out his return at some stage to the Labour Party.

In an interview with *The Times*, Dr Owen said that the prospect of a pact between the SDP and Labour was greater than that of one between his party and the Liberal Democrats. And he hinted that if he did not succeed in securing such an electoral arrangement, he might not himself fight the next election. His mind was not yet made up, because anyone fighting an election had to be ready to serve through the next parliament, and he was not yet ready to give that commitment. The SDP will carry on regardless, whether new evidence would have made any significant impact upon a jury's decision.

Dr Owen said that Labour was moving towards social democracy and that it would not be long before Labour MPs with European connections began to use the

words Social Democrat. "I have always said I would never join the Conservative party. I'm not a Conservative. I have admiration for some of the things that Mrs Thatcher does, almost always when she is acting least like a Tory, breaking up monopolies, challenging vested interest. But I'm not the slightest bit attracted to the Tory party or government. And I don't find the wets the slightest bit appealing."

As for Labour, "it is extremely unlikely that they would want me or that I would want them. If there was to be an arrangement with the Labour Party it would be better and easier, and carry more credibility, if it was with an SDP that still existed."

But he continued: "If that is not possible, and we have the lunatic course, and all fight each other at the next election, I have no messianic view that I have to tell the British public how to vote. In those circumstances I would have enough difficulty making up my own mind in the privacy of a polling booth. However, I am ready, if there have been enough changes, to choose to help to get an alternative government. I haven't

yet seen it, but Labour has moved a long way."

Dr Owen, once Foreign Secretary in the Callaghan administration, said: "Something makes me stop saying I will never rejoin the Labour Party." And he praised Mr Kinnock, saying: "He has changed a lot. That takes courage. But I don't think the public know if his conversion is real, that is his problem."

Agreeing that on Labour's tax proposals the SDP was finding "increasing common ground", Dr Owen praised Labour's shift on economic and industrial policy, saying: "John Smith, Gordon Brown and Tony Blair have produced a really quite marked shift. There is still a slight tipping of the hat to old style corporatism and a touch of interventionism, but it is a tipping of the hat to say goodbye." What Labour should do, he said, was to adopt the SDP's "big idea" of merging the tax and social security systems. It should drop its complicated tax reforms, which would overload the system. He praised Labour for being "more positive about the European Community", and he said that there was a "much firmer

edge" about Labour's emphasis on the anti-inflationary value of joining the exchange-rate mechanism of the EMS. He declared: "There is for the first time a sniff of the 1990s about their policy here. It is still only a sniff, but you do get the feeling that, on ERM and the EMS and the EC, it is not just warmed up Callaghanism but that the party has moved on and that's right."

But Dr Owen made it clear, apart from a willingness to support proportional representation, any deal between the SDP and Labour would require further movement from Labour on defence. He said: "Kinnock has himself to take on defence. He's too vulnerable on this issue to ignore it. He's got to show a level of understanding and involvement. He's got to use the word Trident. He's got to show he understands why Mitterrand and Rocard are willing to have a French nuclear deterrent and why they are ready to have air-launched stand-off missiles on their Mirages. There is a case for us having the same on our Tornados."

Because his conversion is suspect he's got to reinforce the impression that he is serious, and

he has not got a lot of time."

Saying that Mrs Thatcher would fight the next election and "very likely" win it, and the 1990s then belong to the Conservatives, Dr Owen said it would be "sheer lunacy" for the Labour Party, the SDP, the Liberal Democrats and the Green Party to fight each other at that election. "In 1983 and 1987 the opposition parties were genuinely divided on substantial questions. In 1991-92 the situation will be very different. The policies of the opposition parties are much closer. The Labour Party is no longer advocating deeply dangerous and deeply damaging policies."

Dr Owen predicted that Labour would "come down to earth with a bump" next year as its lead in the opinion polls collapsed, and it might then be willing to consider working with others. "There is virtually no chance with the Liberal Democrats, but there is a very small chance with Labour." He himself would stay in politics only "as long as there is a constructive role, as long as there is a real chance of getting together a governing force which would be good for the country."

Faith may move mountains but not the one-trek mind

Bernard Levin on a burden de Klerk shares with Gorbachov: ancient, undying attitudes that defy reform

President de Klerk's *grand tour* seems to be going well; whether he too can go well is still an open question.

He is certainly saying things that sound significant, but so is President Gorbachov, who is finding out that although *glasnost* and *perestroika* are fine words, they would butter no parsnips even if the Russian people had any butter, or for that matter no parsnips. Some of the things crawling about in the political underworld of South Africa can give you nightmares, and Mr de Klerk's position is quite as precarious as Mr Gorbachov's, if not more so.

Until the evidence is unambiguous, we should muted the cheers for a free and peaceful South Africa. But we should not allow the cheers to be silenced altogether. Remember that the years when progress seemed a mad idea, so mad that it was not worth even talking about it, were the years in which Mr de Klerk was coming to political maturity. Just as I prophesied the avatar who would come to begin the cleansing of the Soviet Union, and watched without surprise the appearance of Mr Gorbachov with a giant mop in his hand, so I never allowed myself to believe that the ice age in which South Africa lay frozen would or could endure for ever. I was often accused, during the two long nights, of foolish and reckless optimism; well, I am an optimist and I shall never cease to be one, but it was not just that which told me that I would see the Soviet Union free and South Africa fair: the main reason for my invariable conviction will be found summed up, with admirable conciseness, in the seventh chapter of St Matthew, verses 24-27 inclusive.

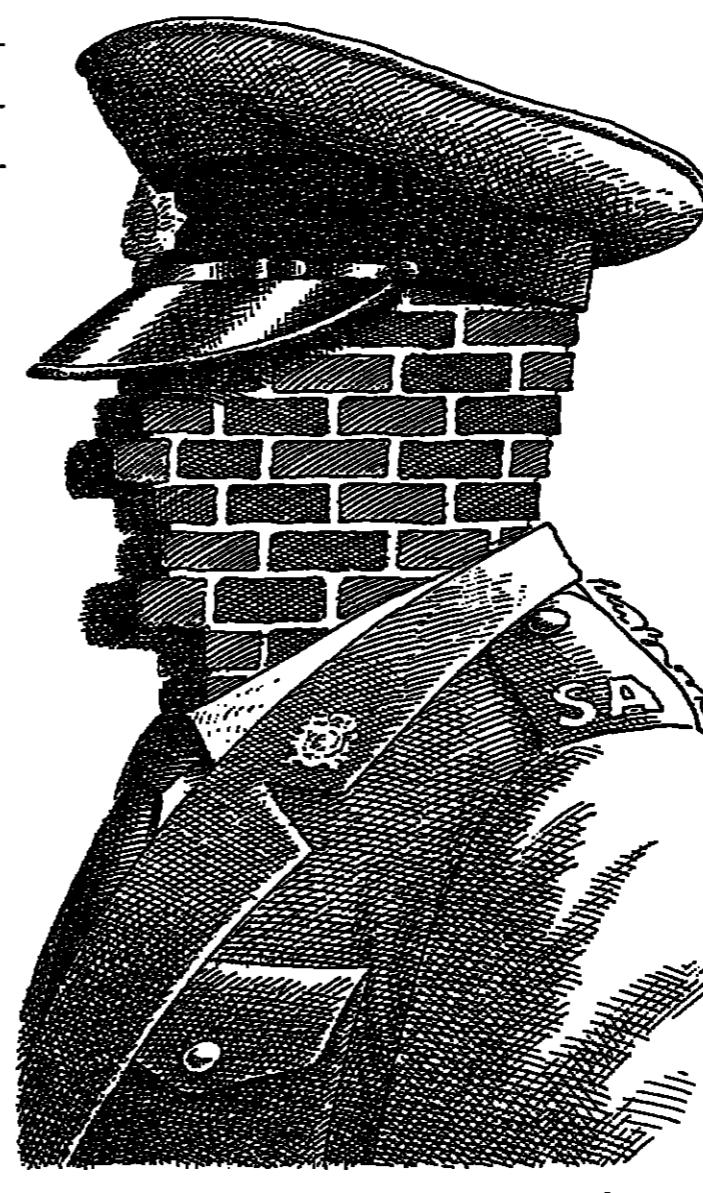
Yet just as Mr Gorbachov, even if he is entirely genuine, is in a race to break the habits of thinking which have been so long and so deeply ingrained in the beliefs and attitudes of his country, so Mr de Klerk, even if he is entirely genuine, is in a race with

those who refuse to become colour-blind.

Which brings me to Piet van der Merwe. Van der Merwe is the archetype stupid Afrikaner, about whom all the stupid-Afrikaner stories are told. (A sample: Lieutenant van der Merwe is asked how he would arrange a firing squad to make absolutely certain that the condemned man is shot; he replies that he would put the victim in a cleared space and have the riflemen form a circle round him. A second sample: Constable van der Merwe is putting in for promotion, and has to answer some test questions, one of which is: "What are rabies and how do you treat them?" Van der Merwe's answer: "Rabies are Jewish priests and I treat them with contempt.") And what the Soviet reformer has put up with in the form of apparatchiks mercilessly trained never to have a thought of any kind, the South African reformer has to put up with in the form of Piet van der Merwe.

Piet, as I may presume to call him (he is really quite a friendly figure), was photographed some weeks ago, at a scene of violence. This particular van der Merwe was a young, smooth-haired policeman, quite good looking and in the thick of the struggle (van der Merwes are not cowards). He was plainly taking his job seriously; his tongue was between his teeth, and his whole demeanour showed the effort he was making. And, without malice aforethought, or indeed anything aforethought, he was doing what he had been trained to do, what he did better than anything else, and what he enjoyed most in the world: he was hitting what he would call a Kaffir over the head.

You must understand that Piet van der Merwe, for all his sterling qualities, can hold in his mind at any time only one thought at most; if the one thought is a large or complicated one, he can grasp only a part of it. It is therefore felt essential that whenever van der Merwe is in a position of some responsibility or power, those



instructing him make sure that they never give him more than one thought, and that, if possible, a simple one.

When van der Merwe joined the police force, he was told that his job was to hit Kaffirs over the head. His superiors, mindful of the limited thought-space in his mind, would have taken care not to complicate things by varying the rule according to the circumstances; they rightly feared the potential confusion in van der Merwe's mind if he was told that he should discriminate by, say, situation, time of day, demeanour

of Kaffir, presence of cameramen, etc. No; better play safe: tell him that all he has to do is hit Kaffirs over the head, an instruction naturally accompanied by reassurance that nothing untoward will happen to him in the way of accusations of brutality or the like.

From that day to this, van der Merwe, with his IQ of 37, has stood foursquare before his duty, and hit Kaffirs over the head; what is more, from this day to when he is buried, he will continue to hit Kaffirs over the head, and if there are any Kaffirs where he is going

after he dies, he will hit those Kaffirs over the head, too.

President de Klerk, like President Gorbachov, has very serious problems to deal with, whether he is the Man on the White Horse or not. But Mr de Klerk, again like Mr Gorbachov, is unable to get down to the immense task before him – which is the transformation not just of a country, but of the entire ethos, attitude and nature which has made that country what it is – without finding a way to persuade van der Merwe to stop hitting Kaffirs over the head.

Of course, van der Merwe has been told from his infancy that Kaffirs are not fully human beings, but a lower order of creation. That, however, is not why he hits them over the head; if he were told they were god-like beings, but that nevertheless he had to hit them over the head, over the head is where he would hit them. After all, nobody told him in the first place why he was to hit Kaffirs over the head, and he certainly did not think to ask.

Some think that the devil rules the world. Of these, many would point to van der Merwe to support their claim. They would speak of his pointless cruelty, his racial prejudice, his disregard for justice, his brutalizing of himself. They miss the point: I go so far as to say that van der Merwe is not basically a bad man at all. He is just a man who has had, throughout his life, only one thought in his head, and it has never occurred to him that he might change that thought for another one. Until he does, until the characteristic sound of South Africa ceases to be the thwack of van der Merwe's club on the head of the nearest Kaffir, that beautiful country will never cleanse the stain on her beauty, and President de Klerk will draw up Constitutions in vain.

*Commenting on the collapse of B & C, I prophesied that Sir Peter Thompson, executive chairman, would get a huge "golden handshake" from the crash. He assures me that he would get nothing by way of handshake, and for his entire remuneration only a twentieth of the sum I mentioned: I accept his assurance and offer him apologies for my injustice.

member of the local club. Hain recently joined members of the Neath club committee at the Welsh Cup final at Cardiff Arms Park, scene of one of the worst demonstrations 20 years ago.

Hain, however, says he has no fears of being put on the spot by members of the Neath team who favour playing in South Africa. Seven Neath players are now touring Namibia with the Welsh side, but before they left they signed statements supporting the sports boycott of South Africa, and the Welsh Rugby Union has taken the same stand. "The Welsh Rugby Union and Neath have swung fully behind the policy that I have been advocating," says Hain. "We can now enjoy our rugby standing shoulder to shoulder united on the sports boycott." Neath's nickname? The Blacks.

● It is considered revolutionary that churches may shortly be able to advertise on British television – but on packets of condoms? It is happening in South Africa, at least, where a Dutch Reformed Church in Cape Town has been granted permission to advertise the Gospel on contraceptives distributed free by medical clinics. Each packet will bear the message that the condoms are being offered to counter Aids, but that it is God's will that sex should be part of marriage.

Hain's big try

Anti-apartheid campaigner Peter Hain, once the most hated man in Welsh rugby, is about to become a non-playing member of the principality's finest club. Hain was chairman of the campaign that opposed the Springbok tour of 1989-90 and organized demonstrations at every match. The former Young Liberal, now Labour's prospective parliamentary candidate for the safe Neath seat, has been invited to become a job which would

time, and he has a queue of customers. "There is an enormous market. Every year the world seems to get a little richer," he says. Daniels has produced just 22 pocket watches since he began in 1968, and six go on show for the first time in public at Garrards in London today. Clocks and watches are a lifelong obsession, he admits, and although each timepiece takes him 3,000 hours to produce, he insists: "I have never worked in my life. Creating watches is pure pleasure, with its historical, intellectual, technical, aesthetic, useful and amusing qualities."

Ring of fire

What the rest of us know as Ulster's bandit country is known to conservation branch officials in Northern Ireland's Department of the Environment as a very beautiful district. The department announced this week that it plans to designate the Ring of Gullion in South Armagh as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and invites public comment. The area is indeed beautiful, comprising an extinct volcano, Slieve Gullion, encircled by



1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

MR GORBACHOV'S NEW DEAL

The announcement of a referendum in the Soviet Union on President Gorbachov's latest economic package was attended yesterday by a degree of confusion unusual even by Kremlin standards. Assuming that this unprecedented consultation of nearly 300 million citizens of the Union does indeed take place, a fascinating question must arise. How will Mr Gorbachov avoid it becoming a referendum, not merely on the "new deal", or even on the Government led by Mr Nikolai Ryzhkov, the Prime Minister, but on the Gorbachov presidency? Heads he wins, tails they lose.

The package itself is an unsatisfactory hybrid of more or less arbitrary price and wage rises, public works programmes to soak up unemployment, and a modest attempt to deregulate some industries. It differs from Franklin Roosevelt's original New Deal in almost every respect, beginning with the problem it is intended to address: a bankrupt command economy rather than merely a depressed free-market one. Whereas Roosevelt sought to alleviate unemployment after the Depression by proto-Keynesian methods — with very little success until American rearmament began after 1939 — Mr Gorbachov is trying to prevent huge unemployment by tinkering with the misdirection of resources instead of unleashing market forces to subvert the entire centralized system.

Thus the question which the referendum will purport to answer — "Do you support the introduction of a market economy?" — is unrelated to the ragbag of decrees which Mr Ryzhkov will unveil on television today. Not that the Soviet peoples will cast their votes on such an abstract question anyway. The risk for Mr Gorbachov is that they will be tempted simply to register their despair at the prospect of yet more sacrifices in living standards, with no tangible return and with the communists still in charge. They will say to themselves: "That's another fine mess you've got us into, Mikhail Sergeyevich!"

If the result goes against the Government, the architect of the master-plan, Mr Gorbachov himself, will coolly walk away from the consequences. He will plead as his excuse the constitutional separation of powers, which obliges the Prime Minister, Mr Ryzhkov (who fought against the plan until he saw that his job was at risk), to accept responsibility for defeat. And who would then appoint a new Prime Minister? The same Mr Gorbachov. Heads he wins, tails they lose.

A resounding "no" to the package might be deemed less than constructive by Mr Gorbachov's remaining admirers in the West, among whom Mrs Thatcher is still the most fervent. Why, though, should a Russian, never mind a Ukrainian or a Transcaucasian, help to pull the President's chestnut out of the fire? He has promised new deals too often before. However one looks at the present offering, it has little to recommend it to the ordinary citizen. Russians do not necessarily march on their stomachs, luckily for their leaders. But they need something credible for a creed, and Mr Gorbachov's version of centrally-planned "market socialism" is not credible.

"First stuff yourself, morality comes later," wrote the young Bertolt Brecht. Today's reformist communists claim to be realists, but they yield nothing in cynicism to Brecht, who was a public apologist and private critic of Stalin. The Gorbachovs of 1990 are democratic to the nth degree, as long as they alone can dictate the agenda. As soon as their right to do so is called into question, they slap down their critics. A new law awaits the rubber stamp of the Supreme Soviet, designed to punish with up to six years in jail those who insult the President — a crime which will differ only in name from the archaic offence of *lèse-majesté*.

Given that defeat in the referendum is quite likely, what is the President's real motive in allowing it to be held? Is he trying to dish Mr Boris Yeltsin by outbidding his most dangerous rival in the democracy stakes? Or is it not more likely that Mr Gorbachov — still smarting from his public humiliation on May Day but as sure of his own destiny as ever — now hopes to strengthen himself by a direct appeal to the masses for a personal endorsement? Marx himself called this tactic Bonapartism; he had withering things to say about it. But who in Moscow reads Marx these days?

HALFWAY TO REDEMPTION

The dramatic policy implications of the Prime Minister's pledge to treat the environment as a tenant with a "full repairing lease" will be apparent when the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change publishes its report on global warming tomorrow. Without action to curb emissions of "greenhouse gases", the report concludes, global mean temperatures within 40 years will average between 1.4 and 2.8 per cent above pre-industrial levels.

The main lines of Britain's response to these findings have now been agreed by a Cabinet committee and are revealed today in *The Times*. The centrepiece of this autumn's White Paper on the environment will be a national strategy for controlling man-made emissions of carbon dioxide. The aim will be to freeze CO₂ emissions at 1990 levels by 2005.

Environmentalists are likely to criticize the Government for excessive modesty, drawing unfavourable comparisons with the Dutch Government's target of holding emissions to 1988 levels by 2000. Even so, complacency will imply reducing projected levels of CO₂ emissions by 20 per cent. Politicians have to consider not only whether that is technically feasible but what measures are cost-effective, and will be accepted by the public.

Ministers are convinced that Britain can meet the 2005 target without too much economic disruption. The policy is not just to rely on exhortation, as in the past, but to concentrate on energy conservation and on fiscal incentives and penalties to change consumption patterns. This approach, based on experience of the oil price rise of the 1970s, is sound. More dubious are the assumptions that a 1970s-style recession can at the same time be avoided, or that the target can be met, as Mrs Thatcher insists, it must, without interfering with "the great car economy".

The main culprit today is not vehicle exhaust, but power stations, which are responsible for a third of Britain's CO₂ emissions. There is considerable potential here: replacing coal-fired generation by natural gas would cut emissions by 40 per cent, and co-generation of energy and heat or combined cycle power generation would produce further savings. The considerable cost would have to

PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT

A well-kept secret was let out of the mailbag yesterday by Sir Gordon Borrie, director general of fair trading. The secret is that an organization exists to save people from junk mail. It is called the Mailing Preference Service, has existed for seven years and is supported by the junk mail industry.

The MPS not only exists; it holds an annual luncheon. Yesterday it lunched Sir Gordon, and he ungratefully repaid its hospitality by more or less accusing it of refusing to blow its own trumpet. Sir Gordon hesitated to suggest out loud that an indiscriminate mail-shot was called for. But he said, in OFT-speak, that "an effective publicity campaign has to be properly resourced and targeted to reach its audience." May the MPS (Freepost 22, London W1E 7EZ) be overwhelmed by the public response.

The direct selling industry is currently enjoying a boom, expanding by about 10 per cent a year. This is immensely profitable, both to the Royal Mail and, presumably, to the direct sellers themselves. But junk mail is not so good for trees, a correspondent to this newspaper estimated that he received more than six pounds of such mail through the post every month, which works out on the back of a junk mail envelope at 60,000 tons a year for the whole country. We could apparently spend eight months of our lives reading junk mail, if we did not do the expected thing, and junk it.

Asking the industry to publicize its anti-junk mail service is like asking butchers to promote vegetarianism. Let us, the industry must have

predicted that Labour would win each other in 1983 and 1987. In 1983, the Conservatives were defeated. In 1987, the Labour Party is much more deeply damaged.

The package itself is an unsatisfactory hybrid of more or less arbitrary price and wage rises, public works programmes to soak up unemployment, and a modest attempt to deregulate some industries. It differs from Franklin Roosevelt's original New Deal in almost every respect, beginning with the problem it is intended to address: a bankrupt command economy rather than merely a depressed free-market one. Whereas Roosevelt sought to alleviate unemployment after the Depression by proto-Keynesian methods — with very little success until American rearmament began after 1939 — Mr Gorbachov is trying to prevent huge unemployment by tinkering with the misdirection of resources instead of unleashing market forces to subvert the entire centralized system.

Thus the question which the referendum will purport to answer — "Do you support the introduction of a market economy?" — is unrelated to the ragbag of decrees which Mr Ryzhkov will unveil on television today. Not that the Soviet peoples will cast their votes on such an abstract question anyway. The risk for Mr Gorbachov is that they will be tempted simply to register their despair at the prospect of yet more sacrifices in living standards, with no tangible return and with the communists still in charge. They will say to themselves: "That's another fine mess you've got us into, Mikhail Sergeyevich!"

If the result goes against the Government, the architect of the master-plan, Mr Gorbachov himself, will coolly walk away from the consequences. He will plead as his excuse the constitutional separation of powers,

which obliges the Prime Minister, Mr Ryzhkov (who fought against the plan until he saw that his job was at risk), to accept responsibility for defeat. And who would then appoint a new Prime Minister? The same Mr Gorbachov. Heads he wins, tails they lose.

A resounding "no" to the package might be deemed less than constructive by Mr Gorbachov's remaining admirers in the West, among whom Mrs Thatcher is still the most fervent. Why, though, should a Russian, never mind a Ukrainian or a Transcaucasian, help to pull the President's chestnut out of the fire? He has promised new deals too often before. However one looks at the present offering, it has little to recommend it to the ordinary citizen. Russians do not necessarily march on their stomachs, luckily for their leaders. But they need something credible for a creed, and Mr Gorbachov's version of centrally-planned "market socialism" is not credible.

"First stuff yourself, morality comes later," wrote the young Bertolt Brecht. Today's reformist communists claim to be realists, but they yield nothing in cynicism to Brecht, who was a public apologist and private critic of Stalin. The Gorbachovs of 1990 are democratic to the nth degree, as long as they alone can dictate the agenda. As soon as their right to do so is called into question, they slap down their critics. A new law awaits the rubber stamp of the Supreme Soviet, designed to punish with up to six years in jail those who insult the President — a crime which will differ only in name from the archaic offence of *lèse-majesté*.

Given that defeat in the referendum is quite likely, what is the President's real motive in allowing it to be held? Is he trying to dish Mr Boris Yeltsin by outbidding his most dangerous rival in the democracy stakes? Or is it not more likely that Mr Gorbachov — still smarting from his public humiliation on May Day but as sure of his own destiny as ever — now hopes to strengthen himself by a direct appeal to the masses for a personal endorsement? Marx himself called this tactic Bonapartism; he had withering things to say about it. But who in Moscow reads Marx these days?

The demonstrators are hardly "sanculotes" either. They tend

Observer's view of Romanian polls

From Mrs Edwina Currie, MP for Derbyshire South (Conservative)

Sir, How can you begin to call the Romanian people "gullible" (leading article, May 22) when they have just gone through a bloody revolution which required courage of the highest order? And how dare you imply that the attitudes of the British observers were "frivolous" and not "robust" when we agreed with the very large party from the USA and disagreed with a French socialist and some lawyers from Sweden?

My colleagues from the Labour Party, officially representing the British Parliament, was not Roy Hattersley — whom I did not see at any time during my visit, but who appears to have come to the same conclusions — but the well-respected Robert Wareing, MP for Liverpool, West Derby.

We reckon we know intimidation and ballot rigging when we see it; we are certain that what we observed in Romania included nothing of the sort, but was in fact as free and fair an election as could be achieved by people for whom this was all completely new.

Your leader talks glibly about street violence and the "disillusioned sanculotes". We saw two such "sanculotes", in the main squares of Bucharest and Timisoara. In both cases the event was of a daily political rally; the Romanians have discovered Hyde Park Corner. Despite a massive disruption of traffic in Bucharest (they have discovered traffic jams too, now petrol is no longer in short supply), the police and army have for weeks shown enormous restraint.

This was no *Trafalgar Square* poll tax demo, with baton-wielding police or tear gas. Instead there is pop music, popcorn from the burgeoning private stalls, and people talking politics long into the night.

The demonstrators are hardly "sanculotes" either. They tend

to be the intelligentsia from the university, whose debates have a strong flavour of the Sorbonne in 1968. This lot, however, are not for Marxism but in favour of more rapid privatisation — a matter of some debate in our own country and elsewhere.

The inhabitants of the squares are convinced of conspiracies everywhere. We saw no evidence of such conspiracy. Incompetence, yes; the election could have been better conducted and we would want to see much simpler procedures, more assistance at the polling stations, and more rapid counting next time. A more vigorous press and media on western lines is also essential. Inexperience was, however, offset by the determination of the voters and the helpers from all parties at the local level to make the thing work.

As for the landslide personal victory of President Iliescu, the fact is he had no effective opponents. One had been in France for 14 years and the other left his country for exile half a century ago. I wonder how we might have voted in 1945, had two of the three candidates for prime minister spent the war in comfort in Canada? Handicapped like that, the minor parties did as well as could be expected. I hope they can recover, perhaps with advice from equivalent parties in the West, and learn how to get out of Bucharest on to the doorsteps to fight elections properly next time.

Many of the observers were

thrilled with what they saw. We felt we were present at the birth of a new democracy, more fragile than some of its neighbours, with a more painful start, but with every hope for the future of this attractive country.

Yours sincerely,

EDWINA CURRIE,

House of Commons.

May 22.

addition, Conde's delegate to the National Dialogue set up by the Guatemalan Government itself in accordance with the Central American Peace Accord of 1987.

Amnesty International has issued an urgent appeal on his behalf but so far there has been no sign of him. Last week his wife, who has filed an official writ of *habeas corpus*, was summoned to a morgue to see if she could identify a murdered and tortured body that had been found. Fortunately this was not Pajaro.

It could soon be if representations are not made at once at all levels by those with a concern for human rights and for the good name of the people and Government of Guatemala.

Yours faithfully,

ROBERT KEE,

82 Camberwell Grove, SE5.

May 20.

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HEALTH

When using one's loaf can help the problem drinker

Millers will rejoice at recent reports suggesting that British drinkers, who eat more bread than Australians, are in consequence less likely to suffer brain impairment. Dr Jean Lennane, an Australian doctor interested in alcohol-related medical problems, bases this claim on the damage which can be done to the intellect by deficiency of thiamine, Vitamin B1. Bread, particularly wholemeal, is a rich source of thiamine. Heavy drinkers, bread eaters or not, suffer from thiamine deficiency for several complex reasons: absorption of the vitamin through the small intestine is reduced even if their diet is vitamin-rich. The cause of this is unknown, although overactive guts are one factor. Even after thiamine has been absorbed into the system, an alcohol-damaged liver is unable to utilize it efficiently.

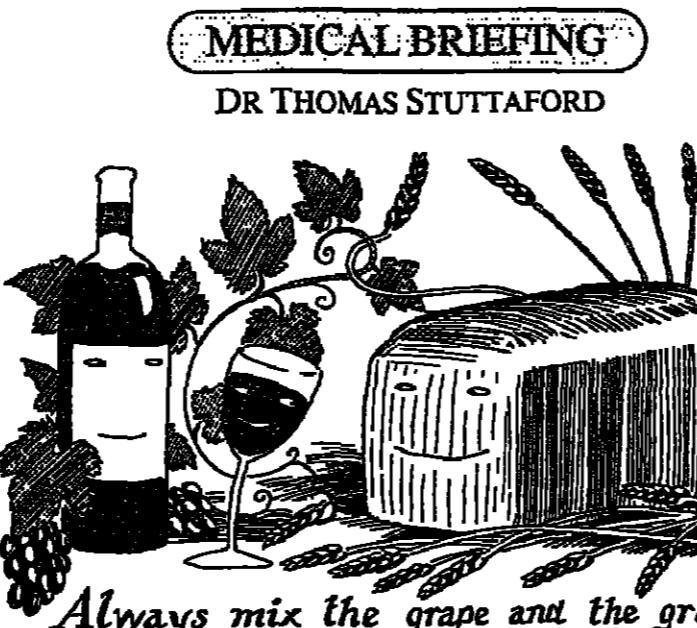
Dr Lennane claims that she has found signs of intellectual impairment in hard-drinking politicians and company directors more often than in other professions. The symptoms, known as Wernicke's encephalopathy or, if they are irreversible, Korsakoff's psychosis, are well charted because they stem from damage to a very small, circumscribed portion of the brain. The patients suffer absolute loss of recent memory, a deficiency which they compensate for by filling the memory gap with imagined experiences; fortunately for them it is also associated with a mild euphoria. Dr Lennane describes the forgetful businessman who loses his ability to plan ahead, who becomes confused and inflexible, with a reluctance to acquire new skills, as having the signs of thiamine deficiency. Many doctors would feel that they were suffering from a generalized loss of brain structure due to overall malnutrition or multiple

small strokes. Brain scans show that these people have widespread brain shrinkage, with the frontal cortex being particularly badly affected. As Dr Lennane expresses it: "The company director is only able to survive because he has secretaries to act as their front lobes."

Heavy drinkers may suffer from a wide variety of other Vitamin B group deficiencies as well as lack of thiamine. They are often short of Vitamin B6, pyridoxine, the vitamin famed for its use in the treatment of pre-menstrual tension, and nicotinic acid. Intake of vitamins A, C and D is adversely affected by high alcohol intake: 44 per cent of alcoholics are short of Vitamin A, 36 per cent of Vitamin C, and Vitamin D levels are almost always universally low. Intestinal malabsorption and pancreatic disease exacerbate any dietary deficiency but the most important cause is that, since alcohol is energy rich, it is often used to replace more nutritious foods – particularly if the general lifestyle becomes confused.

Brain damage to heavy drinkers occurs for reasons other than malnutrition. After heavy drinking on an empty stomach the blood-sugar level may fall to a point where the brain is poorly nourished and damage occurs. If this is repeated too often the damage may become permanent, hence the importance of taking food with alcohol.

The good news is that, with treatment, cerebral function usually improves, and even the changes revealed by scans are partly reversible. All drinkers are well advised to supplement three good meals a day, taken to avoid low blood sugars, with additional vitamins. But they should be careful to avoid excessive iron intake, which might further damage an already



compromised liver. Given these precautions, it would seem unnecessary to add thiamine to the beer, as has been proposed in Australia.

Babies cursed by a lack of love

The life of the average British toddler contrasts sharply with that of the 14,000 Romanian children under the age of six who are now being brought up in orphanages. The orphans, 25 to a ward, about 150 to a unit, are fed for 9p a day. Inevitably, life in the orphanages is Dickensian. The untrained staff are too busy to pick the toddlers up and too starved of cash

to keep them free of scabies and rickets. The children never escape from solitary confinement behind cot bars. Feeding time is unemotional and basic, beer bottles are filled with a blended vegetable mush, then a bottle dropped into each cot.

The children, reared without human contact, neither laugh nor cry – they have long since found that their tears will never be answered. They have not learnt to talk, and address all people regardless of sex as "Mama". When western health teams put the children together they stare blankly but warily around them, for unlike normal babies they have no interest in each other, do not touch or prod their cot-mates, let alone play together.

British experts are pessimistic about

the long-term outlook for children who are emotionally and physically deprived in their early years. In the experience of Dr Barry Lewis, a consultant paediatrician, previously deprived children who are later well cared for may lose their distinctive withdrawn, suspicious expression but will never learn either to accept or give love as spontaneously as other people, and as they grow older may well develop aggressive characteristics. Physically the prescription of tender loving care produces an immediate growth spurt, but it is Dr Lewis's impression that, once stunted, a deprived child never fully catches up either physically or mentally.

• The Romanian Orphanage Trust funds a medical team and supports orphans. Contributions to any branch of Lloyds Bank or the Bank of Scotland.

A new view on sore throats

George London, the Wagnerian singer, said that a performer's voice was his capital. "When I sing properly I only use the interest on my voice and keep the capital intact, when I force my voice I am spending the capital." The last election campaign provided a good contrast between the opposing speaking styles of Mrs Margaret Thatcher and Mr Neil Kinnock. Mrs Thatcher, it is rumoured, spent one and a half hours getting the right intonation into her voice for a particularly important phrase. On the other hand, Mr Kinnock squandered his capital as he toured the country and became vocally bankrupt before polling day so that he was forced to attend the voice clinic at the Middlesex Hospital.

Medical students are taught to remember that chronic laryngitis traditionally attacks the boxer, the barrow-boy and the barman. The boxer because his nose has been flattened and his nasal passages and sinuses blocked; the barrow-boy because he is always shouting; the barman because his vocal chords are subjected to tobacco smoke and bathed in the fumes of alcoholic drinks. A politician's life can, and often does, combine the risk of both the barrow-boy and barman but now any aspiring Prime Minister can watch their vocal chords in action and thereby learn to speak without torturing them.

BREATHING SPACE: Lawrie Smith

I DON'T normally dream, but I dreamed a lot during the Whitbread Round the World race because as skipper I was never fully unconscious. We had four-hour watches on Rothmans, and by the time you had got all your gear off, eaten, taken an hour to get to sleep, and been woken up 15 minutes before your next watch was due, you'd be lucky to have had two hours.

By the time you have been out there a week it gets so you can't feel your toes and people with rheumatism start to suffer. There's nothing you can do, you just put up with it.

We had lots of stuff on board to protect our skin from the weather, that's essential. All the boats were given free face cream, shampoos and stuff for the lips. You had to layer that on and wear sunglasses and a hat otherwise the heat, particularly in the southern ocean, would make you keel over. When it gets cold again, you wear man-made fibre clothes, not cotton, because that absorbs water and doesn't dry. Still, you are permanently damp and there



We had those special drinks which were full of carbohydrates for energy, and minerals, but I didn't miss anything in particular. I have no favourite food, although occasionally I feel like a beer.

For four or five months before the race we spent five days a week running four miles in the morning, then we went to a police gym to climb ropes and do circuit training or to a Nautilus centre to pump iron, and we would end up on the playing field with a football. I never do any exercise normally, I have to have a reason because I'm lazy and you have to be fairly disciplined. I play a bit of squash, that's all. The biggest problem on the boat was three or four weeks doing nothing. Some of the crew did press-ups or sit-ups, but I didn't do much.

I don't do anything special to relax. I suppose I am pretty healthy, although I'm a bit tired. I've never had anything seriously wrong with me. I had a broken nose once because someone hit me – I never got the chance to ask why.

Interview by HEATHER KIRBY

Will long-term tests on tamoxifen back up claims that it could prevent breast cancer? Ann Kent reports

Thousands of women will be given the chance of avoiding the three curses of ageing – breast cancer, heart disease and osteoporosis, the bone-thinning disease. They will be invited to participate in a controversial trial, taking a potent anti-cancer drug every day for at least five years.

The women will also be offered a powerful carrot in the form of regular and thorough medicals, which will include tests of blood fats and bone density and screening for breast and ovarian cancers.

Four hundred British women considered at high risk of developing breast cancer have already taken part in a pilot study to ensure that the drug, tamoxifen, has no untoward side-effects when taken by healthy women. They will be joined by 5,000 other high-risk women over the next year or so, after the project has been approved by the United Kingdom Co-ordinating Committee for Cancer Research.

Because the pilot study, run at London's Royal Marsden Hospital, shows that the anti-cancer drug lowers blood cholesterol, there are plans to extend the trial to a further 25,000 women who have a low risk of breast cancer. It will aim to establish if tamoxifen provides protection against heart disease as well as breast cancer. If, as also seems to be the case, the drug prevents the thinning of the bones that begins soon after menopause, then participants may have the bonus of avoiding osteoporosis.

The potential benefits of this trial are high. The lifetime risks of getting breast cancer are one in 12, of coronary heart disease one in four, and of osteoporosis at least one in four. There is no solid evidence that tamoxifen will reduce these risks. The trial is based on a scientific hypothesis and strong evidence that tamoxifen leads to a 20 per cent reduction in mortality by

preventing new tumours in women who have already been treated with the drug for breast cancer. Those involved in the trial hope that, taken over a longer period, tamoxifen may reduce the incidence of breast cancer by a third to a half.

Tamoxifen mimics the action of the natural female hormone, oestrogen, in some parts of the body, while blocking it in others. By acting as a weak oestrogen substitute, it is said to reduce blood cholesterol and strengthen bone. However, oestrogen is also known to promote the growth of breast tumours; by blocking oestrogenic activity in the breast tissues, tamoxifen is thought to prevent the growth of cancers.

Tamoxifen was originally intended as a contraceptive pill, but its developers, ICI, found that while preventing ovulation in rats, it appeared to encourage it in women. Because of this, and because tamoxifen's effects in pregnancy have not been tested, only women who are not at risk of pregnancy are selected for the trial.

Tamoxifen was launched in 1973 as a breast cancer drug, Nolvadex, but is now out of patent and generic versions are made by at least 22 other companies. Researchers have long suspected that the drug may be as useful in the prevention of breast cancer as in its treatment. However, when Dr Jack Cuzick, the head of the mathematics, statistics and epidemiology department of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund (ICRF), first proposed this in

humans are affected the same way. According to Dr Powles, vast numbers of women have now been treated with tamoxifen worldwide with no signs of primary liver tumours.

Some of his patients have been using tamoxifen for three years, and Dr Powles hopes to have recruited 1,000 women on to the trial by the end of 1992. Half of them, unknown to themselves and their doctors, will be taking dummy tablets.

Iris Wright, a 49-year-old office temp from Crowborough, Sussex, joined the tamoxifen trial last November. Mrs Wright's paternal aunt, maternal grandmother and two maternal aunts have had breast cancer. In the past five years, one of her sisters has died of the disease, while another is under treatment after the discovery of pre-malignant changes in the breast.

"In a sense it was an odd thing for me to do, because I had always refused to take the birth pill, and I seldom even take an aspirin," she says. "I was worried at first about taking an anti-cancer pill, but now I don't think about it, or cancer, much at all. Getting these regular check-ups is a tremendous bonus as far as I am concerned."

Since starting the tamoxifen there have been no side-effects that she can ascribe to the drug.

Early results of Dr Powles's trial have revealed no major side-effects, although hot flushes, a common symptom of women in the age group, were more common. Where these were troublesome, hormone replacement therapy (HRT) was provided. However, some women found the drug reduced their menstrual tension and headaches.

It is likely to be about seven years after the national trial has begun before results are analysed.

Richard Peto, head of the ICRF Cancer Studies Unit at Oxford, stresses that the potential of tamoxifen should be kept in perspective. "We do have to be careful, because there have been so many things in cancer research which looked as if they would be wonderful, and then turned out not to be quite so wonderful after all. My own hope is that it will reduce heart disease even more than breast cancer. Heart disease kills five times as many women."

A wonder-drug for women?



Human guinea-pig: Iris Wright is taking part in the long-term tamoxifen testing

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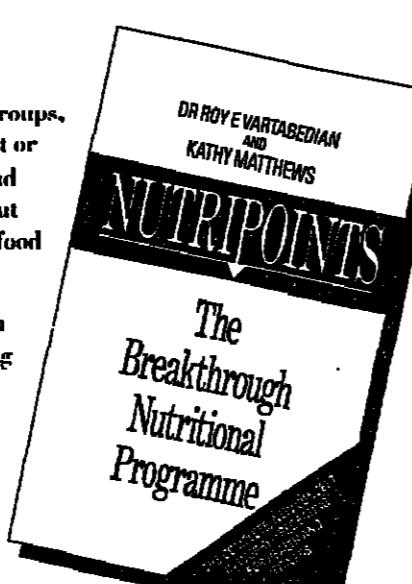
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GRAFTON BOOKS

NEW TACTICS TO BEAT KILLERS

The tamoxifen trial heralds an entirely new philosophy, in which cancer is tackled not by prevention or cure, but by interrupting the cancer process. It is an approach that is likely to be extended to other diseases, particularly mental illness, heart disease and arthritis, says Sir Walter Bodmer, president of the Human Genome Organization, the international body co-ordinating research into drawing up the human gene map.

Breast cancer researchers in Britain are pooling their data on inherited breast cancer to speed up the race to discover the breast cancer gene. Sir Walter believes it is likely to be identified within a few years. The inherited form of the disease represents about 5 per cent of cases, but finding this gene could lead to discoveries about who is susceptible to the more common forms of the disease.

Similarly, with heart disease

he believes that it may soon be possible to identify high-risk individuals whose cholesterol levels are dangerously high, and ensure that they follow special diets.

Aspirin is already known to be effective in preventing a second heart attack. However, taking daily aspirin to prevent heart disease may carry a higher risk of suffering a stroke, and so it is not generally advised. Finding the heart disease gene would identify those men who would benefit from aspirin or other preventive drugs.

Some researchers believe that a deficiency of beta carotene may lead to the development of certain cancers. However, the deficiency is likely to occur because of faults in the way this particular nutrient is broken down in the body. Again, if the susceptible group could be identified, then special dietary advice or food supplements could be offered.

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FICTION

Over-top game of unhappy families

WE MEET them first in a sepia photograph taken in the early 1930s. Florence doing her crochet, sitting between her daughter Kitty and her granddaughter Joanna. They are exiled from their privileged paradise, the big house in Jersey with its magical garden full of wisteria and cineraria, all lost through dead grandfather's gambling debts. Now they live in genteel poverty in Hendon, an outer London suburb, tormented by memories of Eden.

But that's not the half of it. They are an unholy trinity, fervent in their Catholicism, feverishly devout in their peculiar passions, and linked by bloody umbilical cords. Kitty is tiny, exquisite, capricious, frigid, with white skin and lethal emerald green eyes. Her Antarctic eyes can kill puppies, abort babies (other than her own), and foreseen deaths at sea or in war. Her father had taught her that beauty and breeding are the only things that matter, and she destroys the decent men who fall in love with her.

Furthermore, Kitty loathes her daughter Joanna, who is outrageously red-haired, big-footed, clumsy, too tall, and totally unwanted. Granny, who loves them both, calls Kitty "headsstrong"; in fact she is an insatiable child-abuser. Joanna, who tells the tale first, is hospitalized with cracked ribs, a fractured skull, a detached retina. She is attacked in the suburban villa with Kitty's fists, a broken gramophone record, a kitchen knife. For her own safety, she spends much of her time in grim convent schools, where she discovers the "ecstatic euphoria" of falling in love (with other girls, and later with anyone who will devote himself to her), and mentally rewrites the Catholic doctrines to explain her own family.

Granny, Our Lady of the Sorrows, covers up for monstrous Kitty, comforts Joanna, does her crochet, and mourns her lost grandeur. In Jersey, where Granny

Victoria Glendinning
reviews a steamy story of three female generations, Catholicism, and mad child abuse

was uncrowned queen of the island, she had "eight smartly dressed, doting members of indoor staff". Now she has unsatisfactory skivvies who leave as soon as they rumble Kitty, and has to shop in places where the assistants do not even know her.

Granny and Kitty also tell their stories and put their point of view. Their monologues go some way

JOANNA
By Lisa St Aubin de Teran
Virago, £12.95

towards explaining why Kitty hates her daughter – revealing the loss of her first love in the Great War, her sexual traumas, and the special significance for this family of green eyes, red hair, body size, plus a whole intricate web of genetic traits and strange recurrences. But Kitty remains obscure. Is she, as her mother believes, just a beautiful flower transplanted into inhospitable soil? Or a psychological casualty of war and social change? Or is she the devil?

The novel is a rich mixture of horror, luxurious descriptions of gardens, bodies and clothes, sociological detail, and the supernatural. Kitty ends up ravaging in an asylum, and Joanna, after an emotional trajectory different but hardly less lurid than her mother's – "Sex became my family, my country" – contracts cancer, from which Granny also dies. No happy

codings here, although it is suggested, not convincingly, that Joanna loves her own children.

It's hard to know how significant it is that Kitty, the mad child-abuser, attributes her problems to boredom. "Boredom is a disease. It is one of the most dangerous conditions in the world. Those who have never suffered from it cannot understand its gravity." The novel is not boring. It is written with undaunted verve and fluency. But it doesn't add up.

There is a price to pay for all the hysteria and wisteria. The over-egging of the writing thins rather than thickens the plot. There is a carefree sloppiness. The author seems to think that camellias bloom in this country in June, that Napoleon III was Bonaparte's son, and that Dickens's novels were appearing in instalments in 1839. I do not believe that aristocratic Granny, born in 1869, would use the word "slewing"; and one sentence, about Granny shielding her daughter from the consequences of her violence, surely means the opposite of what was intended: "I know one cannot buy sanity, but one can buy the privacy that keeps its presence hidden from the law."

The proliferating pile-ups of imagery are not always well found: "Shame shaves away one's friends like unwanted hair" suggests that the friends were considered superfluous, which wasn't so. Joanna describes her best friend at school as having "carmine lips" which "curved into a natural kiss and left a dimple with gossamer down that could catch shadows and play with them like a pale Kaleidoscope". She describes her own hair as "red with the redness of cherry brandy and the added, darker but still natural sheen of conkers burst from their spiked cases" which sounds like advertising copy for a henna rinse. The whole thing goes over the top. In war, and in writing, that's a gallant if hairily dangerous way to go.

FOUR ten-year-olds are having their first flute lesson, in a rundown Catholic primary school. Which is odd, since they are good Proddie boys, already imagining themselves tooting contempt at the Left-fitters, in the parade band. But this is Glasgow, where stranger things happen (Mo Johnston, to name but one). The boys fight noisily for the honour of taking home the school's one instrument. It falls to Brian Ritchie, for having the best natural embouchure.

George Wilson's dad doesn't like to play second fiddle to anyone, but cheers up when he hears the name of the bandmaster. He and Mr Bennett are in the same Lodge. So a couple of words are exchanged, and a telling handshake. Now look who's taking home the flute! Not that Brian minds. His mum's already put her foot down: "Salvation Army's one thing. Orange Walk's another." Eddie Logan couldn't care less. His Da's a smoothie man, and Eddie's already decided to take up the snare drum. As for Tam Rae, he's used to waiting.

It's the early 1960s, and the boys are in their last term at Primary. Their class teacher, Mrs Kirk, encourages Tam and Brian to raise their sights – a bursary at the High School can lead to Higthers and University. Life in the fast lane. For George and Eddie, however, it's Junior Secondary just across the road. The pattern is set, and we watch it unfold over 20 years against a largely tarian backdrop, with excursions to Northern Ireland and the US. The boys drift in and out of each other's lives, founder members of the Forever Young generation. Forever Young is what Eddie stays, blown to bits

Papists, prods, tartan terrors

John Nicholson

THE MAGIC FLUTE
By Alan Spence
Canongate, £12.95

ABLE BAKER CHARLIE DOG
By Stephannie Vaughan
Heinemann, £13.95

LEE'S GHOST



By Petronella Pulsford
Constable, £11.95

and later attracts Special Branch attention, thanks to his Irish connections. The flip-side of sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll was paranoia, and Alan Spence writes like a man who was there. Supporting characters in *The Magic Flute* – Tam's psychedelic American wife Ruby, Paki the Dealer, and Bird the Sex Man – narrowly avoid being stereotypes, and the book's structure is only just robust enough to prevent any of the strands breaking away. But the whole reflects the brittle, strung-out spirit of the times to perfection. This is a formidable first novel from one of Scotland's most accomplished literary talents.

Stephanie Vaughan is another writer of extraordinary talent. *Able Baker Charlie Dog* is a collection of short stories, linked by a narrator, Gemma Jackson, a young American woman whose background has left her rootless and footloose. Gemma's father was a professional soldier, a logistics officer in strategic outposts for America's Early Warning System. His work was secret, never discussed. But he was a reading man, who spoke to his daughter about the rotation of crops or the Defenestration of Prague, where other fathers might talk about the Yankees. As his oldest child, she learnt how to gut a dove the European way, plant tomatoes, load a shotgun, as well as how to play Parcheesi, checkers, and cribbage.

Like most American short story writers of her generation, Miss Vaughan shows the influence of Raymond Carver. Her stories are simple – fragments of childhood recollection mixed with raw slices of suburban life – their tone downbeat, slightly off-centre. Car crashes (trivial), cancer (serious though not necessarily fatal), a family dog that refuses to be given away, a man torn between two wives, a harassed mother who finds solace rolling in the snow. Not phoney tales of arms and the man, but vivid dispatches from the front where the real fighting takes place.

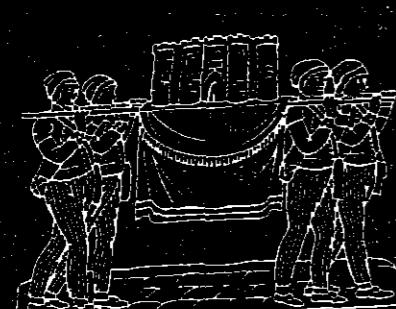
Reality is more elusive for the tormented heroine of *Lee's Ghost*. She lives with her cat Hosanna in a house by the sea, haunted by memories of her sailor lover. The memories she could live with, but Lee develops a conviction that Gabriel has returned. She keeps seeing him around the house, fixing curtains, sitting at her typewriter, stark naked. She can see him, but her friends don't. They are a bohemian crowd, addicted to affection and astrology, sexually ambivalent, but tolerant of Lee's little idiosyncrasies.

The plot thickens, and Lee sickens, but all's well in the end. Petronella Pulsford is an actress turned writer. Her style is distinctly theatrical, a hybrid of Gothic and rococo, but the book she has created is both effective and original. I look forward to seeing what she can accomplish with a story less obviously derived from personal tragedy.

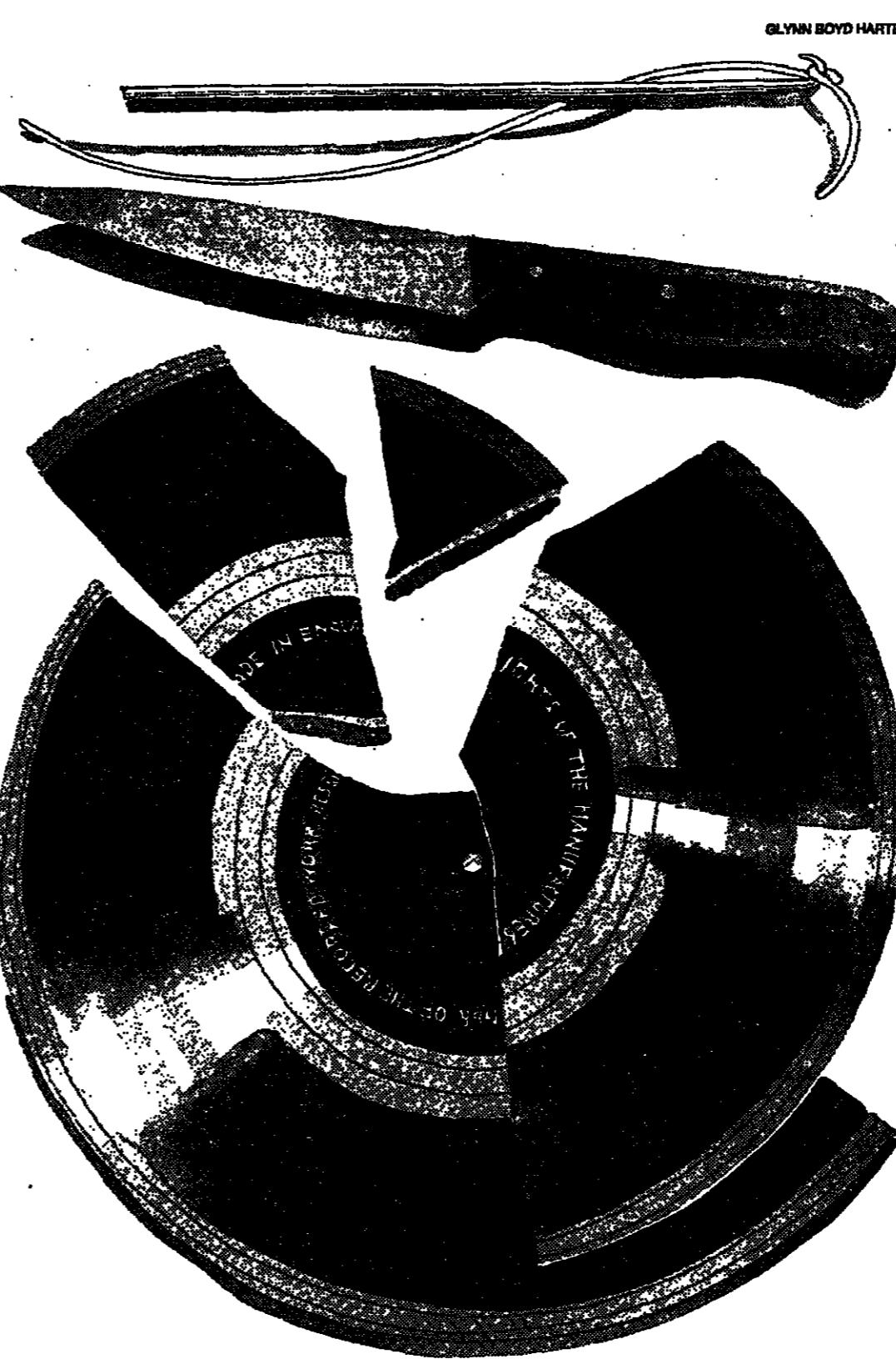
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– Richard Cobb in *The Times*



Dr Jekyll, I presume

HISTORICALS
Philippa Toomey

MARY REILLY
By Valerie Martin
Doubleday, £12.95

NO ONE notices the scars on the hands and neck on the under-housemaid. Why should they? In a household of six servants she ranks very low, happy to work in a congenial household. Her employer is a rich bachelor doctor. He notices the scars, and asks her to write what she knows she cannot bring herself to speak about. She has been cruelly abused as a child by her drunken father. Her kind master asks whether her father was two men, one sober and another drunk. Looking back, she agrees with him. Here we discover that the kindly doctor is Dr Jekyll, the well-known physician.

There is a fascination in well-known stories retold by a minor character – for example, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's view of *Hamlet* by Tom Stoppard, and Dr Rochester's mad wife portrayed by Jean Rhys in *Wide Sargasso Sea*. Mary Reilly, the under-housemaid, instinctively hates and fears Edward Hyde. This is an ingenious story, hung on the peg of a weeping housemaid mentioned in Robert Louis Stevenson's classic novel. It gives a vivid impression of the well-to-do London of Dr Jekyll, and the stinking slums of Shoreditch.

• *Meridon*, by Philippa Gregory (*Viking*, £13.99). This is the third in a series following *Wideacre* and *The Favoured Child*, in which Sarah Lacey, given to the gypsies as a child by her frantic mother, is now called Meridon, and meets Dandy, the girl she calls sister, to rise in a circus, and learn to fly the high wire. Even in the 18th century there are fatal consequences when sex raises its ugly head, and Meridon flees, finding by chance the estate to which she is heir. The book is melodramatic without humour.

• *Theo and Matilda*, by Rachel Billington (*Macmillan*, £13.95). Theo and Matilda pursue each other down the arches of the years, sometimes as a monk and great lady (around 770), and again in 1540. In 1580 they are married with a large family, and a large income dissipated by Theo's extravagance. In 1680 they are in a psychiatric ward. A black humour enlivens this novel of reincarnation.

• *Leddy Lady*, by Jane Aitken Hodge (*Hodder & Stoughton*, £13.95). Sequel to *First Night*. Lissenberg, a small mountain principality, lacks its prince, and the democratic American Princess Martha finds her subjects rebellious and threatening. Love, war and opera are the themes. It ends happily to extracts from Beethoven's new opera *Regulus*.

• *Anna*, by Cynthia Harrod-Eagles (*Sidgwick & Jackson*, £13.95). Sacked by an odious English family, governess Anna Peters finds herself in danger in Paris of 1803, but is rescued and whisked off to Russia by Count Nikolai Kirov. The first in what promises to be a lively series.

Get thee to a nunnery

FIRST NOVEL

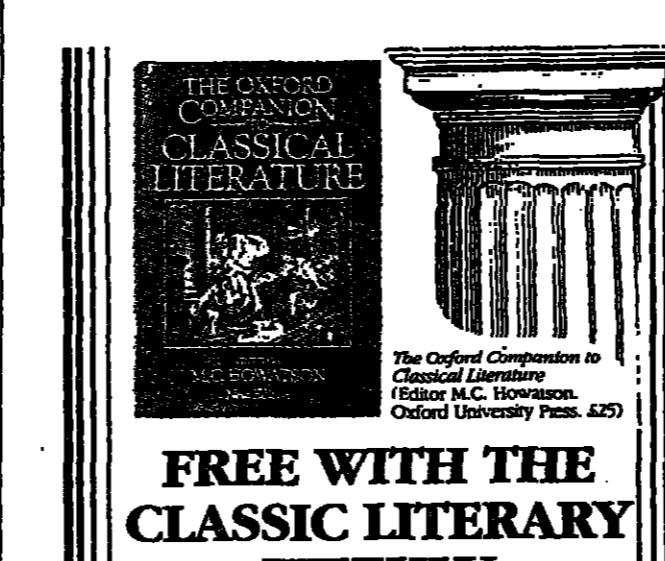
Philip Howard

THE FADING SHRINE
By Moy McCrory
Cape, £12.95

male chauvinism even from monks, pregnancy, flagellation with the "discipliner"; no arts, few letters outside monasteries; and, which is worst of all, continual fear and danger of death, if you are unlucky, by immurement. This is outside my field, but I was thoroughly persuaded by the technology of Dark Age painting and of herbalist abortion. It is not a book for the squeamish. The Mother Superior heroine sacrifices her virginity brutally to punish her spiritual pride in her unblemished body; the schoolgirl pupil of the modern nun (who was thwarted of her vocation as a

historian) is battered by her good Papist father.

Just occasionally, when Sister Scolastica gets up to her potions, it feels bit like *Carry on Up the Convent*, without the terrible jokes. It is ambitious in its techniques, for example trying to reproduce in language the delirium of sickness or of religious ecstasy. The book has been selected for the top twenty for the feminist book fortnight. Quite right too. Apart from that, it has interesting things to say about the wars of the sexes, the difficulties of love, the importance of teaching, and the hard lives and times of women. One moral seems to be: try to avoid being born female; but if you fail in this, whatever you do, don't opt out of life by taking the veil. This is all wrapped around a mystery from the deep past, which the reader is partly left to solve for herself or himself. A feminist *The Name of the Rose* this ain't quite, but an exciting first effort.



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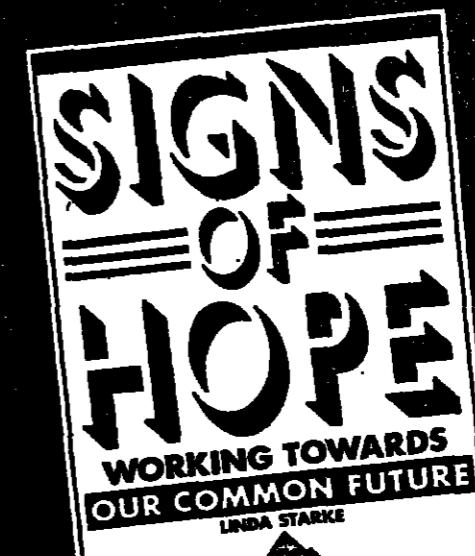
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LITERATURE

How Greene was my staging?

The stage version of Graham Greene's novel *The Power and the Glory* is being revived at Chichester. Denis Cannan, who made the adaptation, recalls his long correspondence with the author

The date was December, 1953. "Do write to me at the Majestic Hotel, Saigon, and say in general how you feel about the suggestions," wrote Graham Greene. He must then have been preparing *The Quiet American*, but he found time to comment in minute detail on the umpteenth draft of the stage version of his novel *The Power and the Glory*, on which we had already worked for over two years. Our meetings were sporadic, because he was always off to somewhere mysterious or just back from somewhere in the news (I look forward to learning from the second volume of Norman Sherry's biography what he was up to in those absences).

Greene had none of the condescension that some novelists show towards the theatre. He had already written the screenplays of *Brighton Rock*, *The Fallen Idol* and *The Third Man*, and his own first play *The Living Room* had been produced. His letters to me reveal that he had an old pro's sense of what would and would not work with an audience.

"The priest has drunk wine and I wonder whether Maria should give him an onion or something to remove the smell of the wine and whether the Lieutenant should smell the mouths of the peasants, but that's probably impossible to do on the stage without laughter. I won't press that point... If the consecration has taken place the priest would have to eat all the bread quickly himself, which would hardly be other than grotesque on the stage."

But he was firm when he felt subtleties had been lost:

"You may have been puzzled by some of my small changes in the dialogue in the scenes I gave back

to you. In several cases I went back to the dialogue of the book because I felt that in order to make the meaning clear to the audience you had sometimes lost the dramatic mystical flash. A religious idea is often a paradoxical one and I don't feel that one wants to smooth out the paradox too much. I remember an awful Jesuit once giving a long sermon in Farm Street to explain away the statement about there being more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner being penitent than over 99 just men. By the time the priest had finished he had reduced the paradox to a very reasonable statement by the headmaster of a public school. I don't, of course, mean that in any place you went as far as this."

Reading his letters now I marvel at his patience. I feel I ought to have done more homework to make up for the defects of the confirmation classes that had been my only religious instruction. To quote a few of his 24 notes on an early draft:

"The priest's sentence beginning 'To think there are people' This seems to me awfully parsonical and Anglican..."

"Same scene, page 20. No Catholic priest would (a) quote the Bible in the Protestant version, (b) quote it at all, probably, in English, and I doubt he would have quoted this passage in any case..."

"Same scene. I think you are a little muddled from the theological point of view about the married priests. They don't cease to be priests because they marry. They simply cease to have the faculties for acting as priests... I don't like the priest's claim, even in its qualified form, to love his enemies."

Father Caraman. It was spotted from the audience by Gilbert Harding. When I tell this story now, no one knows who Gilbert Harding was.

The *Power and the Glory* was published 50 years ago. It looks as though that whisky priest will outlast the lot of us.

Denis Cannan's adaptation of *The Power and the Glory* is now playing at the Chichester Festival Theatre (0243 784437).



Graham Greene: his notes to Denis Cannan revealed that he had "an old pro's sense of what would work with an audience"

CRITICS' CHOICE: LITERATURE

THREE NEW VOICES: Alan Dunnott recently directed *Gas Light* at the Nottinghamshire Theatre Royal and has published his first collection *In the Savage Gap*. New Zealander John Galli works with the Leicester Disaffected People Programme and Liz Smith is a member of the editorial board of *Other Poetry*. All three reading from their own work.

Beeston Library, Foster Avenue, Beeston, Nottinghamshire (0602 255160), tonight, 7.30pm, £2.50 (£1.50).

ROY HUTCHINS: "Whale Nation" by Heathcote Williams. The monster smash eco poem of our times, brought powerfully to the stage.

Victoria Community Centre, West Street, Crewe (0270 211422), Fri, 7.30pm, £2 (£1.50).

NINA CASSIAN, CAROL ANN DUFFY and LIZ LOCHHEAD: Three poets who between them make up a year's collection, with Cassian taking pride of place. Go and hear.

Bolton Institute, College Club, Chadwick Street, Bolton (0204 28851), Fri, 7.30pm, £1.75 (£1.25).

VOLCANO THEATRE PRESENTS: Heart versus mind, body versus soul, east versus west, faithful versus faithless – 19th-century poetic form versus late 20th-century social issues. A fine staging of Tony Harrison's poem.

Green Room, Whitworth Street West, Manchester (061 236 1677), Fri, Sat, 8pm, £4.30 (£2.80).

APPLES AND SNAKES: A pan-African gathering of poets whose work is often at its strongest performance: Eileen Thomas (from Jamaica), Freddie Mwamba (from Tanzania), Titus Mwamba (from Zimbabwe), Pritika Ntuli (from Azania) with the Highlife trio Juwon.

Covant Garden Community Centre, 46 Eartham Street, London WC2 (071 690 9368), Fri, 8pm, £3.50 (£2.50).

STAN TREVOR: Hard-hitting author of *Guns* launches a new edition of his collection *Hard Bones* and performs three texts with the help of Isabella McEwan and Bob Cobbing.

Torrance Meeting House, 99 Torrione Avenue, London NW5 (071-267 2751), Sun, 7.30pm, free.

ROBERT COOVER AND ALASDAIR GRAY: Gray, prominent in what is being promoted as a new wave of Scottish writers, has his novel *Something Different* just published. He joins Coover from the USA, one of the most brilliant and highly influential prose stylists of the last 20 years, giving a rare reading.

They are joined by Welsh-speaking Elyn and the Irish Gaelic writer Rosenstock in this session of border country poetry (Mon, Parish Hall, 6pm). Festival continues until June 4. Further information and ticket prices: Festival Box Office, Hay-on-Wye (0497 821299).

JENI COUZYNE: Editor of the *Book of Contemporary Women Poets* (Bloodaxe) and her own collection *Life by Drowning, The Happiness Bird*. The Blue Nose Café, 78 Mountgrov Road, London N5 (071-354 3655), Tues, 7.45pm, £3 (£2).

TATYANA TOLSTAYA and IRINA RATUSHINSKAYA: In this continuation of the excellent East European Forum series, two prominent younger writers read from their work and discuss their different experience and perception of life in the Soviet Union. With Michael Krasnić.

ICA, The Mall, London SW1 (071-930 3647), Tues, 7.30pm, £3 plus £1 membership.

CRIS CREEK

THEATRE

On such a knight

Susan Ellicott reports a US theatrical first: a woman playing Sir John Falstaff

Pat Carroll has no pretensions about her looks, as she explains her suitability to play Sir John Falstaff. Shakespeare's blustering knight, "I look like a baby's bottom," she says. "It's true," agrees Michael Kahn, her director. "You look like an advert for baby food." The two had to come together.

Cross-dressing has been a popular theatrical device from Shakespeare's time, when boys played young women, to the portrayal of Hamlet in the last century by Sarah Bernhardt and in recent years by Frances de la Tour. But Falstaff? The fat knight described as a "gross, watery, pumpkin", Prince Hal's sidekick in parts one and two of *Henry IV*, the preposterous rogue?

Carroll, aged 63, is probably one of the few women able to carry off the role. She is also, so far as records show, the first. As the actress points out, she is one of the few to want it. She praises Kahn, of the Folger Theatre in Washington DC, as one of the few artistic directors likely to agree. It took a beard test to convince even him she could carry it off in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Initially, he offered her Mistress Quickly, the bawdy wench who ensures Falstaff is cuckolded in his efforts to seduce the wives of two noblemen.

"This is the true essence of theatre," Carroll says of her role. "Theatre makes us look at things in a different way. It is also about dressing up and pretending to be someone you are not."

If the idea of a woman playing Falstaff is difficult to accept, the fact of Carroll playing him is not. A plump 5ft 3in with bad legs – "I walk like an old coot" – she sinks into a chair with her full weight, just as heavily as her Sir John falls on to a stage tavern bench.

A sigh of air rushes out from beneath her. Using words uncommonly spoken by Americans, such as "corking" and "awfully", she is naturally hearty, with a

husky contralto voice deepened by years of cigarette smoke. The only child of parents who worked in the theatre in Los Angeles, she fell in love with Shakespeare in the early 1960s, during a visit to Stratford-upon-Avon. She came to the Bard late in life when asked by Kahn in 1986 to play the nurse in *Romeo and Juliet*.

The role of Falstaff seemed a logical step for an actress known for her appearances on game shows, in television comedy roles and as the voice of a squid in *The Little Mermaid*, the Walt Disney studio's recent cartoon film.

Sipping ginger ale from a paper cup as she throws a pink sweater to the floor from her shoulders, Carroll laughs her throaty cackle as she recounts the pitfalls of adopting the male mannerisms she had to learn to play the vain but cowardly knight.

She says: "My kids told me I looked like the bearded lady in the circus." She unnerved men in restaurants by staring at them to learn how they played with their facial hair and moved their bodies. Carroll shed 30lbs on a liquid diet to be able to bear her 15-lb costume up and down the set's stairs and took exercises to control her breathing and diction. However, the hardest part was making the seduction scenes convincing: "It's hard being this randy person with another woman," she says.

But it works, helped by the farcical style of the production, from the moment Carroll swaggered onto the stage winking a beer mug, even when Falstaff tries unsuccessfully to mount Mistress Ford on a laundry basket.

Some people have asked whether she undertook the role to prove something. "I'm doing this for theatrical reasons, not feminist reasons," she scoffs.

It is not as if she has any ambitions to try another role. She has played out her fantasy. "This may be it," she says and chuckles. "I certainly don't want to do Hamlet. I foresee no other man in my future."



Patricia Carroll as Sir John Falstaff with Marilyn Sokol as Mistress Quickly

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TELEVISION

Appalling? Not really

EXTENSIVELY previewed in yesterday's news columns by Alan Hamilton, the latest in Prince Charles's occasional series of "it really is appalling" tele-documentaries was a curious mix of sermon, uneventful travelogue and apocalyptic warning. Invited to contribute to BBC 1's "One World" week of planet-saving (which presumably means that if the ozone layer is not cleared out and given a jolly good polish by Saturday we shall all have Esther Rantzen to reckon with), HRH faced production problems.

As heir to the throne, he is probably allowed to interview anyone he chooses. Might it not therefore have made sense to interrogate the Duke of Edinburgh on his hunting shooting and fishing policies as applied to Scottish ecology.

Apparently not: *The Earth in Balance* was to be an infinitely balanced and tactful show, starting with a balanced shot of the globe, overlaid with the reassuringly Royal announcement "This is where we live".

From there, it was off to Hong Kong where, over what looked like cut-offs from the last *Whicker's World*, HRH announced that big was not necessarily beautiful and that progress may not be the same as growth. But this is not an especially revelatory or Thatcherite view. Although the Prince can be understandably smug about the way the world has finally caught up with his ecological awareness, he is still bound by the Constitution to stay out of the politics of an infinitely political situation.

So the splendid anger of his earlier architecture show was replaced here by a kind of Christmas-message blandness, as though his every speech to camera had been softened and qualified by hordes of Palace, Home and Foreign Office advisers. HRH is getting better at the job. What he is doing, for an audience of millions, is precisely what his great-uncle, the last Prince of Wales, did for a few dozen onlookers when he visited the mining villages of Wales in 1935 and announced that something must be done. The problem here is that Charles himself can't seem to do it.

The programme the Prince should have been doing last night was the one over on Channel 4 about the architecture of fear in Iraq, where the dictator Saddam Hussein has built himself a victory monument featuring his own arms, 20 metres wide and 40 metres high. Fearing for his life, the critic on the programme did not dare to appear. Charles might, at least, have managed to get the whole appalling thing redesigned.

SHERIDAN MORLEY

FILM

And now, Euro-vision

Oscar Moore on how film-makers and television producers are responding to the challenge of the single European market from 1992

wood studios used to regard foreign distribution as, at best, icing on the cake. Now, producers look to Europe, Japan and Australia as key markets.

But the EC is something of a prickly pear – there are delicious rewards if you can get inside. While the US has been quickly forming joint-venture distribution concerns with Yugoslavia, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, it is frowning on the emergence of EC quotas on US television imports.

The battle over quotas was caused by the EC's Directive on Television and Broadcasting. Due to take effect in October 1991, the directive led the US Trade Representative Carla Hills to lodge an official protest with the international trade body GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade).

However, the directive simply declared that member states must

ensure, where practicable, that broadcasters reserve most of their transmission time for European works (news, sports events, game shows and advertising excepted). Moreover, the requirement is not legally binding. Given that American shows currently account for only 28 per cent of European viewing, and are now given leave to increase that share to 49 per cent, the American reaction seems hot-headed. But it is an indication of the importance that the US attaches to European access that we are now witnessing the return of large US companies to London.

While British companies have been pursuing and, in some cases, acquiring a presence in the US (ITV/MTM; Thames/Reeves) the reverse has also been happening in Britain. Paramount has acquired 49 per cent of Zenith, one of the most prolific British film and television independents, as well as sending over Ilene Maisel to head a European talent-scouting project for the main studio. The first fruits of Maisel's London posting have already been announced: an outline agreement to co-produce a long-term slate of feature films with the BBC. It is perhaps typical that this European exploration has resulted in English-language features.

But is Britain anything more than a Trojan horse for smuggling American interests into the European club? The British have been slow to take Europe as seriously as the Americans clearly have. Channel 4 has welded successful partnerships with like-minded European broadcasters such as Germany's ZDF and France's La Sept, co-producing low budget, even foreign language feature films, and some documentary arts programmes.

The London-based production company, formed London-Paris Express some three years ago. But these are exceptions. The British television franchise-holders have been concentrating more on creating joint ventures such as Tango, the recently announced link between Yorkshire Television and America's NBC network, and shudder at the prospect of big European players, such as Berlusconi's Fininvest and the German giant Bertelsmann, bidding for chunks of ITV franchises in 1992. In fact, this could well happen sooner.

The sensible way for an EC company to gain access to a British television franchise is to take a stake in an incumbent, and with 54 per cent of Thames shares put on the sales block by BET and Thorn EMI, London could have a Eurocaster programming weekday television.

At 80, Akira Kurosawa's mastery of his craft is still unsurpassed. The director of *Rashomon*, *The Seven Samurai* and *Ran* uses complex technology, spectacle, armfuls of extras, elaborate special effects as effortlessly and subtly as if he were handling a fine paint brush. In everything he does, there is the grand simplicity of wisdom.

His autobiography, called *Something Like An Autobiography*, is written as plainly as a tale for children; but teaches more about living, dying and artistic creation than any more pretentious work.

Always a devotee of Western literature, Kurosawa has adapted authors as varied as Shakespeare, Dostoevsky, Gorky and Ed McBain. It is not clear if he has ever read Dickens, but *Dreams* (PG, Lumière, Gate Notting Hill, Screen-on-the-Hill) has very much the character of *A Christmas Carol* – only in eight staves instead of five.

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The first two dreams are light and pretty, with the quality of ballet spectacle. For the first, Kurosawa's own childhood home is recreated; and a little boy witnesses the Wedding of the Foxes which, according to legend, happens when rain and sunshine come together. The second dream is also a child's: dolls come to life to reappear the boy's family for cutting down a peach orchard.

The next two dreams, variations on the theme of death, take the film into a dark second movement.

Kurosawa has written: "A good structure for a screenplay is that of a symphony, with its three or four movements and differing tempi". "The Blizzard" is a nightmare of men lost in a snowstorm and visited by an angel of death. In "The Tunnel" – the film's most haunting episode – a soldier encounters the ghosts of his fallen comrades from the Second World War, who plead for reassurance that they are still alive.

Returning to a lighter mood, "The Crows" illustrates a passage in Kurosawa's autobiography: After looking at a monograph on Cézanne, I would step outside and the houses, streets and trees – everything – looked like a Cézanne painting. The same thing would happen when I looked at a book of Van Gogh's paintings or Utrillo's paintings. . . . The dreaming "I", gazing at Van Gogh's paintings in an exhibition, finds himself entering the pictures, and meeting the artist himself. The magic is only slightly impaired by the unexpected appearance of Martin Scorsese, with his New York aspect and accent, as Van Gogh.

The next two-dream movement is Kurosawa's *Apocalypse*. "Mount Fuji in Red" is a vision of Tokyo devastated by nuclear catastrophe. "The Weeping Ogre" could be Marley's Ghost, doing posthumous penance for the greed of his life in a valley peopled by a hundred spectral ogres, who in life were government officials or millionaires. Just as in Dickens, "The air was filled with phantoms, wandering hither and thither in restless haste, and moaning as they went . . . some few (they might be guilty governments) were linked together".

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REVIEWS

Hypnotic Czech tricks

THEATRE

The Maple Tree Game Courtney, Leeds

IN RECENT years, this country seemed unable to notice more than one dissident writer per country: one Pole for Poland, one Czech, and so on. Pavel Kohout - Czech until his citizenship was withdrawn because of his links with Charter 77 - engagingly refers to himself as having been only Public Enemy No 2 or 3 in his country. Over here he has, until now, been better known as a name in someone else's work, *Kahoot's Macheh*. Tom Stoppard's tribute to Kohout's living-room productions that were his substitute for proper theatre when the end of the Prague Spring frost the hopes of his generation.

The opening of the Courtney Theatre, smaller sibling of the Playhouse's Quarry Theatre, brings an opportunity to see something of Kohout's own work

"It is a funny tragedy," he says - although the distant source of this play is a novel by the Romanian writer, Mircea Eliade. Another of Eliade's books examines the myth of the Eternal Return, which has some bearing on the shapely play Kohout has fashioned, though as harsh political reality rather than myth.

One fine day at the Ministry of the Interior in some Danube country, the infinitely courteous Professor Farana, a retired schools inspector, presents himself. He has come to see a certain

major whom he remembers as one of his pupils. The major denies it. Junior and rival officers become interested in the professor's story and one after the other hook on to his cunningly ramifying tale. He seems such a harmless old buffer at first, and Peter Copley plays him with old-time charm, nodding his bony, white-haired head, artlessly changing his tone, like a hypnotist up to his tricks.

Starting with Abdul the Tartar boy, who has a trick of catching flies (which rivets the attention of the Captain), the story twists on to a mysterious cellar (mesmerizing the State Inquisitor), until the colonel finds himself intent upon the habits of gnomes, and the Minister of the Interior (Avril Clark), a woman whose baroque boudoir we eventually see, with herself reclining as Mme Reamier, is carried away by the tale of a Carpathian beauty.

Gradually the Professor emerges as a sort of Czech Scheherazade, telling an endless story, not to save his own life but to play havoc with other people's.

John Harrison's direction of this shrewd and witty fable, set for the most part in black offices against towering bronze walls, allows each scene to breathe a little after the last words, so that some gesture or expression lingers in the eye. He has drawn a gallery of vivid comic performances from the professor's fascinated listeners, in particular from Ian Barritt's Inquisitor, who embodies one of Kohout's maxims that it is better to treat the tragic with a dusting of humour.

JEREMY KINGSTON

carriage of justice by Nurse Careswell (Ilona Linthwaite), an acerbic wit who may be pictured somewhere between Glenda Jackson and a young fairy godmother, a fairy-figure who does her best to raise the drama onto a more meaningful level. Ciaran Madden stands out for her simmering portrayal of the adoptive mum, all vowels, smiles and longings.

Punctuated by realistic baby noises and the unwelcome strains of *Four Seasons*, there is a lot of rushing in and out with trolleys and babies and fat wads of banknotes, and some heated discussions in which the links between Hippocrates and hypocrisy begin to seem very close. We titter and chortle - at one point we even hold our breath - but altogether the play is a mess.

Every heavily-padded bundle of loose ends undoubtedly has its moments, but this one is too frivolous to amount to effective black comedy, and too flaccid for successful farce.

Heavily cut, it might make a successful first episode for a television sitcom. As it stands, it lacks muscle, and sags like an old man's smile.

MICHAEL WRIGHT

For Einojuhani Rautavaara's *Vincent*, though, the Tsar's old house provides just the intimate scale required by this unrelentingly claustrophobic work. Unlike the writing of compatriots such as Paavo Heininen or Aulis Salminen (whose *The King goes forth to France* visited Covent Garden in 1987), Rautavaara's operas zoom in on an individual, rather than panning over the wider spaces of frequently surreal action and verbal complexity which characterizes much contemporary Finnish opera.

The structure of *Vincent* is simple to the point of naivety. Three acts, each one introduced by a distinctive and oppressive synthesizer "canvas", recreate the artist's life in fast flashback. Between the raising and lowering of the cage which is St Rémy, the



Avril Clark and Peter Copley in *The Maple Tree Game*

The Floating Light Bulb Nuffield, Southampton

WOODY ALLEN only gave the go-ahead for this revival of his sweet-sour comedy, first seen in New York in 1981, after careful vetting. He need not have worried, for Patrick Sandford's production has the air of an extended charade match played in a cathedral. It is in danger of being out-classed by the flashy detail of Caroline Elton's stylish set design, but is fortunate that the acting is meticulous, the characterizations delightful.

Of the two naughty doctors, Francis (Brian Protheroe), the more wicked; lethally suave in his cream suit, and apparently constructed of sandpaper and olive oil. Paul (Benjamin Whitrow), meanwhile, is a mini humbug of a man; rather sweet, balding and soft-centred.

They are assisted in their mis-

ched slouch and earnest, pleading gaze are *echi* Allen, but Sammarco imbues Paul with independent dramatic life. He is Woody without the wisecracks, without the sense one gets in the films that, as well as being a gibbering incompetent, he is highly successful and attractive. Crippled by a stammer, without an ounce of self-confidence, Paul is hardly a comic figure. Hats off to a highly talented young actor.

Paul's problem, of course, is mother (though father, played by Sam Douglas, as a 250lb emotional flyweight, scarcely helps). Sylvia Stann's effortless casts off Noel Coward associations by looking and sounding every inch and vowel a Brooklyn housewife. First girlishly coy, then a hectoring termagant, she demonstrates brilliantly the mother-love which unmans Lee Montague contributes a delicious cameo as a theatrical manager who does not quite live up to expectations.

The problem? Perhaps it is a question of construction - no real sense of beginning, middle and end. Or a failure to pursue events to their logical conclusion - here tragedy rather than comedy.

HARRY EYRES

relationships, the encounters and the existential debates of the life as revealed in the letters rush out in a stream of consciousness as a whole series of 12-tone rows and, more audibly, by a vibrant under-tow of string and percussion-dominated orchestral writing.

The consciousness is, of course, entirely *Vincent*'s; and there lies the opera's weakness. For all the energy of its vocal writing, for all its strong and masterly pacing, the single viewpoint makes for a limiting polarity of musical and dramatic characterization. Van Gogh is a part conceived for, even originally suggested by, Finland's leading baritone and Vincent look-alike, Jorma Hynninen. He is the Christ to the evil spirit of Paul Gauguin (Marko Putkonen). The experience of woman, too, is split into the bad old dichotomy of

angel (Gaby, played by the composer's wife, Sini) and whore (Maria Hoornik, sung by the mezzo, Eva-Liisa Saranrin).

The libretto (Rautavaara's own) suggests there is room for rather more sophistication than Jussi Tapola's production provides. His caricaturing of the ever-changing, yet increasingly predictable quartet of bureaucrats (by turns doctor, priest, critic, secretary and so on) is less effective than his handling of the surging crowd of inmates and brothel guests, sung so robustly by the chorus. Tapola was, however, placed in the unhappy position of building on a foundation already laid by the late Göran Järvelä. With a cleaner slate, and with conducting as committed as that of Fumi Mansurov, *Vincent* may well travel far.

HILARY FINCH

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Poll tax break for wives unlikely

Continued from page 1
of recipients of local government services from the obligation to pay would severely undermine local accountability and the long-vaunted principle advanced by the Government in support of the tax that everyone should pay a contribution to local services.

However, it does seem likely that the review – increasingly seen as a tidying-up exercise aimed at “smoothing off the rough edges” – will ease the burden on owners of second homes and firms faced with absorbing huge business rate increases in one go when properties change hands.

It is also clear that the search for a mechanism to ensure that extra funds ploughed by the Government into the revenue support grant system are used by councils to cut poll tax bills is dominating the early stages of the review.

Proposals to band the charge according to people's income – a solution favoured by many Conservative MPs – and a universal “cap” by which all councils would have their charges limited by the Government have found little favour with the Cabinet group.

Informed sources suggest that some of the ideas being considered would still mean primary legislation having to be introduced by the Government in the autumn. Changing the criteria under which councils can be capped would require legislation and is under serious consideration.

At present councils whose budgets are under £15m cannot be capped, even though their spending increases could be considered excessive.

The committee is not expected to meet again until after the Whitsun parliamentary recess, and Mrs Thatcher has made plain that decisions may not be announced for several weeks.

Insiders are emphasising that with the local elections out of the way there is no need for haste in bringing forward the changes.

Author of Colditz dies

MAJOR Pat Reid, author of *The Colditz Story*, and one of the prisoners who escaped from the “escape-proof” prisoner-of-war camp in 1942, has died aged 79.

Major Reid, who won the Military Cross and was awarded the MBE, died on Tuesday in Frenchay hospital, Bristol, after a short illness. The story of his escape was written in 1952. The book was later turned into a successful film with Sir John Mills playing Major Reid. In 1955 Major Reid published a second book about the camp.



Tearful memories: Mr George Chappam, Queen Victoria's Rifles, remembering fallen comrades in the battle for Calais

Calais salutes heroes who defied panzers

From JOHN YOUNG, CALAIS

UNDER cloudless skies several hundred past and present officers and men of one of Britain's most famous regiments gathered yesterday to mark the 50th anniversary of the defence of Calais.

On the dockside close to where the ferries now ply busily between Calais and Dover stands a memorial to the fallen heroes of the King's Royal Rifle Corps, the Rifle Brigade, the Queen Victoria's Rifles and the Royal Tank Regiment, the first three of which are now amalgamated as the Royal Green jackets.

Theirs was one of the briefest and most poignant campaigns of the Second World War. On May 22 1940, they embarked, ill-prepared and at short notice, under the command of Brigadier Claud Nicholson, with instructions to secure the port and to proceed to Boulogne.

Alas for fine dreams. The road to Boulogne was blocked and Nicholson found himself having to defend Calais from 3,000 men and 800 French troops against the advancing German 1st and 10th Panzer divisions. They were under

orders from Anthony Eden, the Foreign Secretary, who declared that the defence of Calais to the utmost was “of the highest importance to our country as symbolizing our continued co-operation with France.”

Finally in May 1940, the Duke laid a wreath at the memorial followed by others including Lord Airey, Under-Secretary of State for the Armed Forces, and Sir Ewen Ferguson, British Ambassador in Paris, Field Marshal Lord Bramall and General Sir Robert Pascoe. During the playing of the Last Post the standards of the ancient citadel of Calais were dipped in salute.

Afterwards in blazing sunshine the veterans reminisced and renewed long-lost friendships. Mr Doug Spratly, a lance corporal in the Rifle Brigade, was wounded during the battle and taken off by the Navy. He was delighted to have met, for the first time in 50 years, the sergeant-major who had arranged transport for taking him and five of his colleagues to casualty clearance.

Later in the afternoon the



Smiling salute: The Duke of Edinburgh at Dover

Green Jackets band entertained large crowds in the Place d'Armes. The old men and their families seemed serene enough but, amid the jostling throngs of tourists, they were perhaps secretly lamenting their own lost

youth and a time when a trip to Calais meant something altogether different.

In Dover yesterday, the Duke of Edinburgh inspected some of the Little Ships used in the evacuation of Dunkirk.

US may back UN team

Washington

The United States may support the dispatch of United Nations observers to the Israeli-occupied west Bank and Gaza Strip, Mr James Baker, the Secretary of State, said yesterday.

“We would be prepared to discuss an UN observer team if that comes up at the UN Security Council session,” he

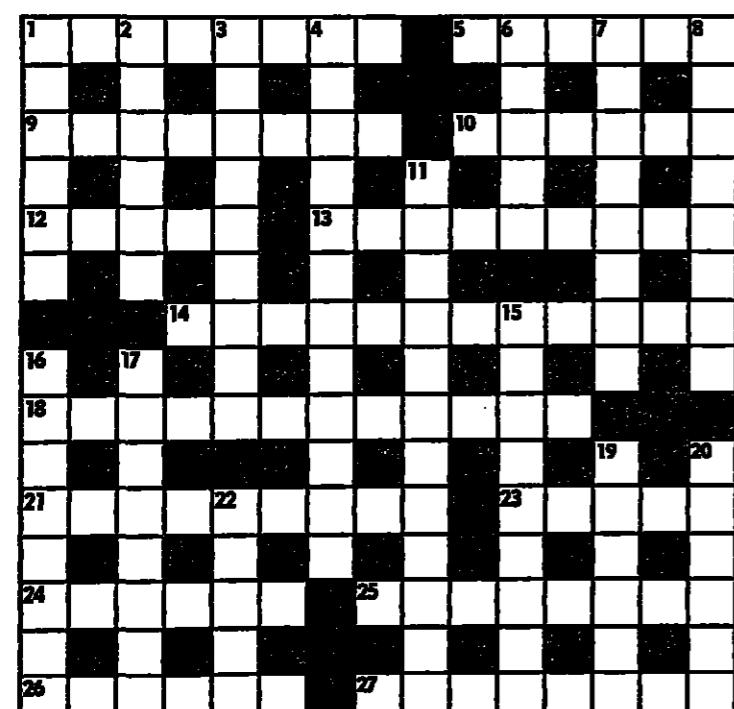
MATTHEW PARRIS

said. The council is expected to meet in Geneva tomorrow.

Mr Baker also rebutted a claim by a spokesman for President Mubarak of Egypt that Mr Bush had told Mr Mubarak that the United States would accept more Soviet Jewish immigrants than planned this year. (Reuters)

Call for UN, page 11

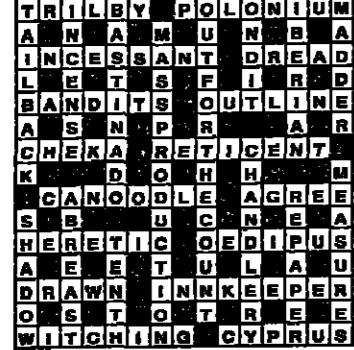
THE TIMES CROSSWORD PUZZLE NO 18,302



ACROSS

- Money put towards fruit cake (6).
- It's rare to get caught in a panic (6).
- Revolutionary leaders in hour of need give battle (8).
- Enchantress left inside the ring (6).
- The bird Roy takes home (5).
- Raising capital back in London borough not the answer (9).
- A fine thing found in old 7's (4,8).
- Something threatening hurt could end in tears (7-5).
- Camouflage expert, mole – he can assume a different shape (9).
- Stir up some dangerous emotions (5).
- Object on top of Egyptian grave (6).
- Remove cover from university? New York's upset (6).
- Humbly receiving attention after the Derby, perhaps (3,2,4).
- “Neighbours” are very familiar (2,4,6).
- Country said to afford scope for mountaineers (5).
- Court the habitat of this criminal (8).
- Give strength to see reign out (8).
- Eventually involved with 9 (2,3,4).
- Right side is in the field (6,3).
- Cod and skate swimming into a barrier (8).
- African girl takes in Europeans (8).
- Uprooted American tree flat on the ground (6).
- A woolly creature (6).
- Try saving South Africa quickly (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 18,301



24 Opposed states start to erupt (6).
25 Glamorous underwear right for girls to be seen in? On the contrary (8).
26 Grey guns could make a private retreat (8).

27 Opposite states start to erupt (6).
28 Something threatening hurt could end in tears (7-5).
29 Camouflage expert, mole – he can assume a different shape (9).

30 Stir up some dangerous emotions (5).

WORD-WATCHING

A daily safari through the language jungle. Which of the possible definitions is correct?

By Philip Howard

CHINCHERINCHEE

- The Apache rain god
- A church bell-ringer
- A South African flower

VAKE

- Empty
- The Armenian ephod
- A crompier's rake

VISTULA

- Vista and fistula
- A reed stalk
- A siege catapult

SLAMDANCING

- Violent dancing
- Talking nonsense
- Misleading tactics at Bridge

Answers on page 20

AA ROADWATCH

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London & SE traffic, roadworks

C. London (within M & S Circs), 731

M-ways/roads M4-M1, 732

M-ways/roads M1-M25, 734

M-ways/roads M25 London Orbital only, 736

National traffic and roadworks

National motorways, 737

West Country, 738

Wales, 739

Midlands, 740

East Anglia, 741

North-east England, 742

Scotland, 743

Northern Ireland, 744

AA Roadwatch is charged at 5p for 8 seconds (peak and standard) 5p for 12 seconds (off peak).

“Includes pollen count.”

WEATHER

Ireland will clear quickly to give a dry, sunny day, except for some scattered light showers in north-western areas. Showers over Scotland, mostly in the north, should die out later in the afternoon to leave bright or sunny spells. Cooler than yesterday, with ground frost in many places tonight. Outlook: Dry and sunny, but cloud and rain coming into Northern Ireland and perhaps western Scotland and Wales later.

ABROAD

Midday: -t=thunder; d=drizzle; fg=fog; s=sun;

sl=sleet; sn=snow; f=fair; c=cloud; r=rain

Scorcher: 11.5 17 63 sunny

Cloudy: 11.5 15 59 sunny

Wettest: 11.5 15 59 bright

Folkstone: 10.5 15 59 sunny

Worthing: 11.5 15 61 sunny

Bognor Regis: 12.5 15 61 sunny

Southend: 12.5 15 63 sunny

Bournemouth: 12.5 15 63 sunny

Poole: 11.5 15 63 sunny

Weymouth: 11.5 15 61 sunny

Torquay: 11.5 15 61 sunny

Falmouth: 12.5 15 61 sunny

Penzance: 12.5 15 61 bright

St Ives: 12.5 15 63 bright

Newquay: 12.5 15 63 bright

Exmouth: 12.5 15 63 sunny

Weymouth: 12.5 15 63 sunny

RHM stock falls after profits alert

By COLIN CAMPBELL

RANKS Hovis McDougall saw its shares tumble by 38p to 360p yesterday on a warning by Mr Stanley Metcalfe, chairman, that "full-year profits are unlikely to achieve the record level of 1989."

RHM said that interim pre-tax profits were only barely changed at £81.7 million (£81.5 million) on sales of £919.3 million (£893.4 million) because of the impact of high interest rates and the knock-on effects of the mild winter.

There was also increased competition in its markets. Trading in Britain, was, therefore, merely similar to the same period last year.

Overseas companies did well, but RHM saw mixed fortunes in its various divisions. In addition, the group has accounted for a £2.1 million extraordinary loss because of the recall of a Mr Kipling product after a contamination incident.

RHM's interim interest charge rose from £12.4 million to £19.9 million. The figure compares with last year's total interest charge of £26.6 million.

The £188 million proceeds from the sale of its 70 per cent stake in Cerebos Pacific was received on April 20, and the sum will help to reduce gearing and facilitate the development of group interests in Europe, including Britain, and the United States.

The group is holding its interim dividend at 3.82p a

share, which will be payable July 13.

With the benefit of trading since March 3 to hand, Mr Metcalfe says that results for the first eight months of the current financial year are "similar to those of last year." Hence, his profits warning about likely full-year results.

In the previous full financial year, RHM reported pre-tax profits of £176.5 million on a £1.79 billion turnover.

A breakdown of pre-tax profits for the half year show advances by grocery products from £18.8 million to £24.9 million, but weaker profits from food services (£9.8 million against £12.1 million), and a setback from £9.1 million to £8 million for Manor Bakeries, the packaged cakes company.

RHM adds that there was a small decline in wrapped bread consumption and continuing competitive market conditions.

Overall, British Bakeries held market share and gained leadership of the brown bread market following the launch of Hovis Wholemeal.

RHM adds that significant investment in tamper-evident packaging and information systems for the grocery division should lead to improvements in production efficiency.

United States sales were a record and trading profits were significantly higher, the company said.

Outhwaite investors must find extra £76m

INVESTORS in the two troubled 1982 RHM Outhwaite insurance syndicates at Lloyd's must come up with another £76 million by July 23 to meet massive losses stemming from a continuing flood of asbestos and pollution claims from the US.

The 1,614 names on twin syndicates 371 and 661, who have paid out £91.8 million towards the losses, face two additional payouts of £13.1 million each in 1991 and 1993 — bringing the total cash calls to £196 million.

Mr Edward Bloxham, the Outhwaite chief executive, said provisions for expected claims were cut from the £76 million estimated at the end of 1988 to £26.2 million, half of which has to be paid next year.

This is mainly as a result of the reduction of liabilities through negotiated settlements with 16 of the 32 syndicates from which Outhwaite took on the non-marine reinsurance.

Individual names will have paid £82,400 each for every £20,000 of business traded on their behalf, with £12,000 more outstanding.

"We perceive a glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel as a result of the slowdown in the rate of deterioration," said Mr Richard Outhwaite, the underwriter.

But Mr Peter Nutting, chairman of the Outhwaite 1982 Names Association, which is suing Outhwaite and 80 members' agents for alleged negligence, said: "Things are not going to get better; they can only get worse. The rate of deterioration is slowing, but the ship is still sinking."

Courtaulds rises to £168m



Top trio: Sipko Huismans, centre, managing director of Courtaulds, yesterday with Richard Lapthorne, left, finance director, and Sir Christopher Hogg, chairman

THE long-overdue rationalization of the European acrylic fibre industry is likely this year, according to Sir Christopher Hogg, chairman of Courtaulds, the paints and chemicals producer, which

has just demerged its garment making operations (Jeremy Andrews writes). Courtaulds has decided to "reduce its exposure" to acrylic fibres.

The slimmed-down group made pre-tax profits of £168

million last year, £8 million up

on the previous year. Earnings per share were 32p, up 13

per cent. The final dividend is 8p, as promised in February.

Tempus, page 25

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Countryside profits plunge 64% to £4m

COUNTRYSIDE Properties, the Essex housebuilder and commercial developer, suffered a 64 per cent fall in profits from £11.1 million to £4 million in the half year to March and turnover also shrank by 39 per cent to £27.9 million. However, sales of speculatively-built houses held up well and the setback was mainly due to a reduction in housebuilding in partnership with housing associations and building societies and the fact that no major office developments were completed during the period. The interim dividend is to go up by 9 per cent to 1.41p.

Housing turnover fell from £31.3 million to £22.7 million, but the bulk of the downturn was in partnership housing where sales halved. Gross profits in the residential division fell from £9.7 million to £5.1 million, while the commercial division slumped to £930,000 (£3.9 million).

Isopad slips to £2.06m

ISOPAD International, the heat control equipment manufacturer, has blamed

"provisions on certain contracts" for a drop in pre-tax profits from £2.5 million to £2.06 million for the year to end-January. Turnover was up 30 per cent to £17 million, but earnings per share fell from 9.5p (12.2p). The total dividend is 5.5p (5p). More provisions are not expected.

Whessoe ahead 78%

THE decision to withdraw from offshore module construction and heavy engineering fabrication in Britain continued to reap dividends at Whessoe, the Darlington engineer, with a 78 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £2.71 million in the half-year to end-March.

The interim dividend is increased by 0.5p to 1.75p, in part to ensure a more even spread over the year. The engineering division more than doubled profits, from £957,000 to £2.29 million, although the timing of various contracts last year depressed profits from instrumentation and control from £566,000 to £421,000.

Brent Walker sells brewery

BRENT Walker has agreed in principle to sell the Tolly Cobbold Cliff Quay Brewery at Ipswich, Suffolk, in a management buyout. Adjoining the brewery will be a museum, public house and restaurant. Brent Walker, which will retain a stake in the brewery, intends the rest of the six-acre site to be a mixed commercial and residential development.

Marconi cable stake

MARCONI, the defence electronics subsidiary of GEC, is expanding into the fast-growing UK cable television market with a £6.8 million investment in Sheffield Cable Media, a British-funded consortium bidding for the Sheffield, South Yorkshire, franchise.

SCM, which finds out next week if it has won the franchise, is competing against seven others, backed by US and Canadian cable and telephone companies, for the area reaching 500,000 people. Marconi has taken a 20 per cent stake in SCM, and said it was currently talking to other cable companies, "some with franchises, some without."

Land Secs raises asset value despite slump in property

By MATTHEW BOND

PROPERTY values in the City of London fell by 2.75 per cent in the year to March, but Land Securities, Britain's biggest property company, has increased its net asset value by 2.1 per cent.

With the gloom over the commercial property sector seemingly darkening by the day, many observers had expected Land Securities to report a fall in net assets yesterday. That it did not do so prompted a 5p rise in the company's share price to 500p, sparkling similar rises in other property investment shares.

Mr Peter Hunt, chairman of Land Securities, expects that the property market will pull itself out of its current trough.

"I believe you can just begin to see the light at the end of the tunnel," he said.

Mr Hunt believes that most of property's current difficulties are due to high interest rates rather than any permanent imbalance of demand and supply, and expects confidence to return when interest rates start to fall.

The value of the Land Securities' portfolio has been estimated by Knight Frank & Rutley, the property agent, at £5.61 billion at the end of March, up £400 million.

Only £84.6 million of that increase came about through rises in value. Falls in the value of City property were

compensated for by modest rises in the values of shops and offices in the West End and in the regions. According to Mr Hunt, industrial property was the star performer, with an increase of 8.5 per cent.

Helped by this revaluation,

shareholders' funds have risen to £44.3 billion. On a fully diluted basis, net assets per share rose to 867p.

There was a far bigger increase in pre-tax profits, up 17.3 per cent to £175 million.

Net rents and interest receivable of £286 million covered total interest charges of £111 million 2.6 times. A final dividend of 12.25p makes 17p (14.4p) total.

The company's gearing, said Mr Hunt, was under 28 per cent. It is 10 years since Land Securities gave up capitalizing part of the interest paid on building its developments.

"We simply didn't have to any more," Mr Hunt recalled. Capitalizing interest lies behind most of the cash-flow problems currently affecting property developers.

The Land Securities development programme extends to more than 1 million sq ft of new offices, including the 170,000 sq ft Grand Buildings development at Trafalgar Square. Despite last year's fall in property values, the company also has five developments within the Square Mile.

Advertising success boosts Yorkshire

By MELINDA WITTSTOCK

SHARES in Yorkshire Television, one of the big five ITV contractors, rose 6p to 242p after it claimed to be winning an increasing share of national advertising revenue.

Yorkshire, which reported a 6.8 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £11.08 million for the six months to end-March, said its share of national advertising revenue is now 8.8 per cent compared with 8.5 per cent this time last year.

Revenue in the second quarter declined by 3.07 per cent compared with an overall decline across ITV of 4.04 per cent and Mr Clive Leach, the managing director, said April's advertising revenue is

up 7.8 per cent compared with 7 per cent for the network.

Interim turnover rose by 11.1 per cent, mainly through increased sales of dramas, particularly abroad, where sales rose from £1.02 million to £7.11 million.

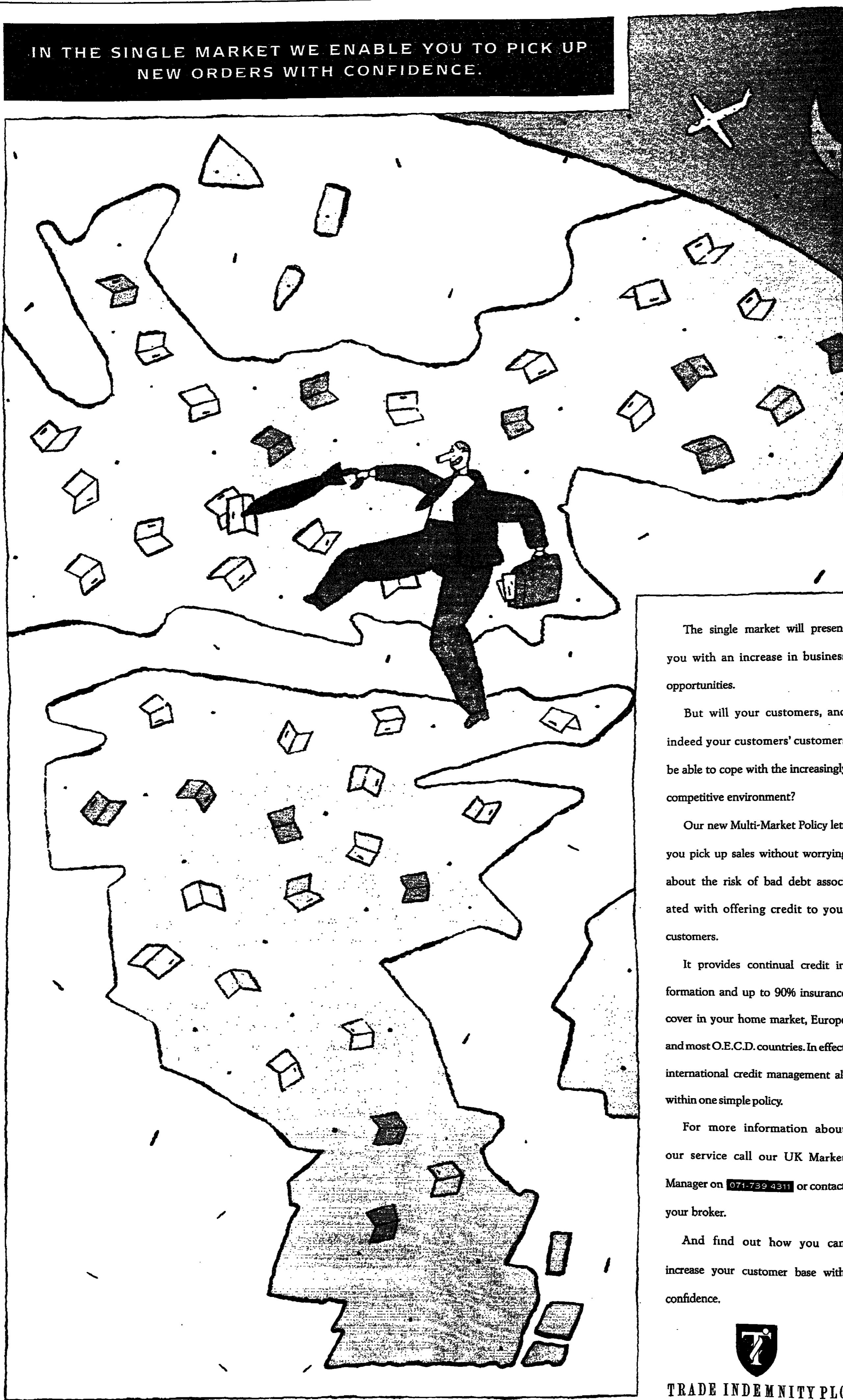
This resulted in an increase in programme costs from £33 million to £43 million. Staff costs, however, were reduced from £19.5 million to £17.9 million. Mr Leach said programme costs will be "back down to their normal levels" in the second half.

Earnings per share rose from 18.3p to 19.3p, while the interim dividend is unchanged at 3.3p.

B·A·T INDUSTRIES

The full quarterly report is being posted to shareholders and copies are available from the Company Secretary, B·A·T Industries p.l.c., Windsor House, 50 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0NL.

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Japanese consortium aims to launch into space race

From JOE JOSEPH, TOKYO

A CONSORTIUM of some of Japan's largest industrial and electronics companies has been formed to compete for a slice of the world's satellite launch business.

Its aim will be to take part of Japan's fledgling space industry out of government hands and eventually to compete with the established agencies like France's Arianespace and others in America, the Soviet Union and China.

Rocket Systems, the tentative name for the new consortium, will be incorporated on July 5 under the leadership of Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Japan's biggest aircraft manufacturer. It expects its first launch in 1993.

But Mitsubishi admits that the competition is stiff and

that Japan's likely challenger will probably be pricier than its rivals.

But Japanese companies, who presently use Ariane rockets, made by Arianespace, for their satellite launches may switch to the home-made rival.

The recent explosion over the Atlantic of an Ariane rocket carrying two Japanese communications satellites may have accelerated the decision to form the consortium.

Analysts in Tokyo expect the demand for commercial satellite launches in the second half of the 1990s to be 15 to 20 a year.

Rocket Systems is pinning its fortunes on the home-grown H-2 rocket, the centrepiece of Japan's bid to join the elite club of nations with independent space technol-

ogy. The H-2's predecessor, the H-1, was a McDonnell Douglas clone.

But all has not gone well

with the H-2. An engine test late last year that burned down the test centre was the latest of a string of embarrassing hitches.

However, if it does get off the ground in 1993 as planned, the H-2 will be able to put into orbit satellites weighing up to 2.2 tonnes — the same as Ariane 4 and competitive with the 2.4 tonnes of the US space shuttle.

The move into commercial satellite launching is part of Japan's growing interest in the space business.

Japan's space programme started in 1955 with a 12-inch rocket that flew to a height of 600 yards. But over the past

five years it has earned credit

for its work analysing Halley's Comet and later this decade it is due to join Space Station Freedom, the international project led by the US.

In March, Japan joined the US and Soviet Union in sending a spacecraft to the moon. Japan's basketball-sized satellite was the first to visit the moon since an unmanned Soviet craft landed on the surface in 1976.

But Japanese scientists are still working with limited funds — Japan's annual space budget is less than one-tenth of America's. However, the money being made available is growing fast. Last year the government finally sanctioned long-term development of an independent manned space programme.

Loan rates 'hit plans to invest'

HIGH interest rates have curbed investment by small companies to the greatest extent since 1979, according to a survey by the Confederation of British Industry. About 27 per cent of smaller companies have cited the cost of finance as the main restraint on investment spending.

Mr Tom O'Connor, chairman of the CBI's Smaller Firms Council, said that continuing erosion of business confidence had an adverse effect on investment intentions. Of 700 companies questioned, 35 per cent were less optimistic, with only 14 per cent more optimistic.

Nobo stock falls

Shares in Nobo Group slumped 47p to 125p after the visual aids and office equipment manufacturer had terminated talks that might have led to a full bid.

Bett's setback

Pre-tax profits in Bett Brothers, the property developer, fell from £1.6 million to £1.5 million for the six months to February. The half-year dividend rise from 1.85p to 2.10p, out of earnings down from 6.61p to 6.51p.

Ambrit loss

Ambrit International, the oil and gas group, made a pre-tax loss of £1.3 million for the year to December — similar to the previous year's loss. Again, there is no dividend.

Profit slip

Ferry Pickering, the packaging group, saw pre-tax profits slip to £1.16 million (£1.3 million) in the half-year to February on sales of £13.9 million (£9.8 million). The interim dividend stays at 2.1p.

Architect down

Tribble Harris, the architect, saw pre-tax profits fall from £2.6 million to £1.16 million in the year to November. The total dividend is held at 3.2 cents out of earnings of 6.37 cents (loss of 9.14 cents).

Analysts expect further falls in US commercial property

From PHILIP ROBINSON, IN LOS ANGELES

THE state of the US commercial property market will deteriorate before improving, according to analysts studying the credit downgrading of Citicorp, America's largest

and factories. Many of the developments were funded by the now collapsing Savings & Loans institutions — the equivalent of British building societies — during the unregulated boom era of former President Ronald Reagan.

Texas is now thought to be over the worst, the market in Arizona has bottomed and California is flat, but analysts say New England has the worst problem. As a result, the US Government has needed to rescue a number of state banks and valuations of property-backed loans of even the largest banks have been reviewed.

Moody's Investors Service, the leading credit analysis, dropped the rating on \$37.4

billion worth of Citicorp's corporate and guaranteed debt on Tuesday, a severe blow to the bank's prestige and a move that will also cost it substantially more in borrowing costs.

Moody's said it believes Citicorp is vulnerable to the deteriorating national property market.

Banks have already been told to tighten what they lend to the property sector, thus starving developers of further cash.

But they are presently unable to sell properties when they foreclose on loans.

"It's like having a shirt with two left arms. It doesn't matter how cheap it is, it is only of use to someone with two left arms," said Mr East.

The Office of Fair Trading said its main concern centres

A MONOPOLIES AND Mergers Commission inquiry into warranty schemes for new houses has been ordered by Sir Gordon Borrie, the Director General of Fair Trading.

Sir Gordon said that he wanted to ensure the public interest is being served by the present arrangements for the two existing warranty plans on offer to buyers of new homes.

The two schemes to be examined are Buildmark, issued by the National House Building Council and Foundation 15, available from a subsidiary of Municipal Mutual Insurance.

Sir Gordon said that he wanted to make it clear that this reference is not an attack on the principle of house warranty schemes.

"A house is the most expensive purchase a consumer is likely to make and if the house is newly-constructed there is a clear need for the buyer to have the assurance it was built to good standards, was independently inspected and there will be protection if structural problems nevertheless develop," he said.

"But it is important alternative schemes should be able to compete."

The National House Building Council welcomed the investigation.

Mr Basil Bean, the chief executive, said: "The council has been quietly doing its work with such success that few now remember the early 1960s when a huge public outcry about the quality of house building led to debates in Parliament."

£1.5bn ANZ bank merger ruled out

By NEIL BENNETT, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

THE Australian Government has blocked the Aus\$3.4 billion (£1.54 billion) merger between the Australia and New Zealand Bank and National Mutual Life, the country's third largest bank and second largest life assured, on competition grounds.

Mr Paul Keating, the Treasurer, said: "It is vital for the efficient application of the nation's savings that there should be a reasonable diversity of institutions.

It is not sensible to leave the promotion of competition to market forces alone when there are pressures towards undue concentration."

Australia would be better served by the independence of its six or seven largest banking and insurance groups, although the Government did not wish to keep the two businesses entirely separate.

The deal depended on Mr Keating's approval. ANZ's acquisition of National Mutual

Royal Bank in March looks, the first stage of the deal, looks likely to be reversed.

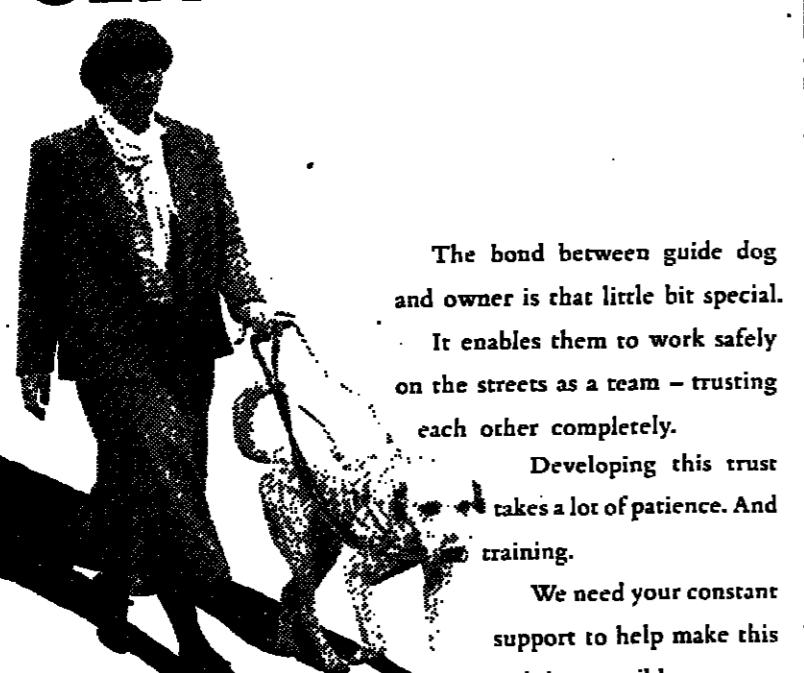
ANZ's shares rose 20 cents to Aus\$4.90 on the news. Dealers had been worried that the merger would force ANZ into a rights issue. Analysts suggested that National Mutual may look at ways to gain an independent listing.

Mr Will Bailey, ANZ's chairman, said he was disappointed by the decision. "The merger has been based on a great deal of careful analysis, and was expected to produce very substantial benefits for shareholders, policyholders, bank customers and for federal taxation revenue."

The suggestion that the merger would limit competition was "simply not true."

ANZ's interim figures to the end of March showed net profits before abnormal items 3 per cent lower at Aus\$310 million. The dividend remains at 22 cents.

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House warranty inquiry



Public first: Sir Gordon Borrie, Director General of the Office of Fair Trading

Trimoco results halved to £3.8m

By MARTIN WALLER

THE hard times in the motor trade are highlighted by pre-tax profits from Trimoco virtually halved in the year to end-March, from £7.51 million to £3.81 million.

But the company, which is about 25 per cent owned by Jameel Group, the new Saudi Arabian owner of Hartwell, the car dealership, is maintaining its full-year dividend at 1.4p with a final of 0.8p.

There is no sign of an upturn yet for the industry. "The feeling is very strong that it's going to be a bad summer," said Mr Duncan Naughten, development director.

Trimoco is already seeing orders for August delivery, when the next set of number plates are issued, indicating that some customers are deferring their purchases.

The worst damage during the last year was done by higher interest payments, which almost doubled from £2.21 million to £4.16 million. These in part related to the decision to buy in the group's leasehold properties during the previous financial year.

Trading profits from the automotive division fell from £7.27 million to £6.17 million, while property earnings were down from £2.44 million to £1.79 million. Included in this last figure was about £500,000 made from property trading, a decline from about £1.4 million last time.

Mr Roger Smith, the chairman, said the group continued to trade profitably from almost all its outlets.

The shares, depressed along with most other motor dealers by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission inquiry into the industry, were unchanged at 174p.

COMPANY INVESTIGATIONS

Reforms in DTI's methods urged

EXTRACTS from the Trade and Industry Committee report on Company Investigations.

INTRODUCTION

A VITAL factor in the success of any developed economy is the soundness, clarity and effectiveness of the laws and rules governing the proper operation on the financial markets and the running of companies. Without confidence in their integrity, the efficiency of these institutions will be undermined. Laws and rules that are not, for one reason or another, enforced bring the system into disrepute. The Department of Trade and Industry is largely responsible for the policing of company law, though other bodies, such as the Bank of England, have specific duties. The Committee has inquired into how the DTI carries out that task.

TIMESCALE

The average time for completion of a basic fact-finding (5447) inquiry was 105 days in 1988-89 again a target of 92 days. For insider dealing cases it is 11 months. For a major investigation the average time is two years and four months. These delays have been described as "scandalous." The DTI has acknowledged that past cases took longer than they would have liked. Recent cases have been dealt with more quickly.

Apart from delays in setting up an inquiry, there are a number of reasons for the time it takes.

- Difficulty in arranging interviews with witnesses.
- Witnesses abroad.
- Barrister inspector in court.
- Overseas link in the affair.
- Abuse by witnesses of right to see criticism.

DTI officials told us: "There is a tension between speed and fairness" but "A lot has been done to remedy the delays." The House of Fraser inspectors reported "in the closing stages of our inquiry we were very conscious of [these] competing pressures." It is the DTI's intention never to allow cases to go on as long in future. We consider this important for the interests of innocent parties and to satisfy both domestic requirements (such as the time limit on demergers) and overseas statutes of limitation.

Among the measures being taken are the more flexible powers in the Companies Act 1989 to discontinue an inspection (section 57), to appoint inspectors on the basis that their report will not be published (section 55), to co-operate more with overseas regulators (sections 82 and 83) and to order partial reports (section 57). These provisions came into effect on February 21 1990. Delays in producing reports have been unacceptably long in the past. They have brought the whole system of Companies Act inspections into disrepute and have been an important reason for the Companies Act 1989.

In insider dealing cases, we have been told that the prospects of a successful prosecution are reduced by a long interval between the dealing and the trial. The DTI says, on the basis of slim experience of insider dealing prosecutions, that the chances of a conviction are greater if inspectors have been appointed.

We recommend that inspectors appointed to carry out major investigations should be expected to report with 12 months.

We recommend that insider dealing inspectors be expected to report within three months.

NATURE OF REPORTS

Should inspectors just find facts or should they also draw conclusions? The Secretary of State has a fairly open mind. At present inspectors do identify individuals for criticism, but are encouraged by the DTI to do so in moderate terms.

The Bank of England and the Securities and Investments Board told us that in their view inspectors should establish fact rather than make judgements. Employers and regulatory bodies would then decide whether an individual's conduct was in breach of the standards expected in his profession. The inquiry process would be speeded up, because inspectors would not have to spend time consulting witnesses about possible criticism of them. Published reports would not lambast individuals without any apparent remedy.

Most of our evidence points the other way. Unless conclusions are drawn, lessons may not be learnt and remedial action may not be taken. It was pointed out to us that one of the reports on the DTI's handling of the Barlow Clowes affair was prevented by its terms of reference from attributing blame, drawing conclusions or making recommendations. This made it more difficult for those reading it to judge who was responsible for mistakes. The County NatWest and House of Fraser reports would be meaningless to the lay reader (including the Secretary of State to whom they are addressed) unless some conclusions had been drawn.

If a report does not identify those to blame for some misconduct, it will also fail to exonerate others involved whose actions were blameless. The wholly innocent may be tarred by association with events for which inspectors would not hold them responsible. We note that officials and ministers at the DTI were largely exonerated by the HoF inspectors, when a mere statement of the facts might have led the reader to a different conclusion.

We would not expect anyone criticized in an inspectors' report to be happy about it. We consider that the danger



Report surprised at Bank of England delay: Mohamed Fayed outside Harrods, part of House of Fraser

latory bodies in respect of individuals should be contained in a separate appendix to their report.

We recommend that the Handbook of the Companies Inspection System be amended to advise inspectors to serve on all those to be criticized in a report the substance of that criticism, with a deadline for response of 21 days and that any response received which the inspectors do not accept should be published as an annex to their report.

We recommend that witnesses should be provided with a copy of the transcript of their evidence.

PUBLICATION

The reasons for not publishing reports are that publication might hamper investigation of crime, prejudice a fair trial, publish defamatory statements or advertise a novel fraudulent practice. In the recent cases of County NatWest and HoF the first two factors were relevant; the County NatWest report was published soon after completion; the HoF report was not.

We consider that the danger

We conclude that in such circumstances the public interest lies first in bringing individuals to court before completion and publication of the report.

We recommend that all major investigations reports be published as soon as possible, not least on account of their effect on markets and trading.

We recommend that normally only the appendix recommending criminal proceedings or disciplinary action should not be published.

We recommend that publication should be delayed only in cases where a criminal investigation has begun before completion of the report and where it would be hindered by publication.

INSIDER DEALING

Insider dealing is important not just as one aspect of commercial malpractice. It is demonstrated by the DTI's responsiveness to new problems in enforcement. Insider dealing has been a criminal offence since 1980. Where incidents of insider dealing are detected, it is usually by the Insider Dealing Group of the International Stock Exchange. They study share-dealing prior to price-sensitive announcements. Acting on this analysis or on information received, they conduct a preliminary investigation. If evidence of insider dealing is found, the case is passed to the DTI. The DTI can:

- Decide to appoint inspectors under section 177 of the Financial Services Act 1986;
- Take no further action (but inform other regulators);
- Authorize the Stock Exchange to prosecute (a new power under section 209 of Companies Act 1989);
- Take no further action (but inform other regulators).

Since 1980, there have been 10 convictions for insider dealing (one of which was overturned on appeal). The ISE has conducted about 240 inquiries since May 1988 and has passed about two a month to the DTI. Since 1985 101 cases have been transferred in this way; inspectors have been appointed in 41 cases; there have been 19 prosecutions and 10 convictions.

The DTI point out that the proportion of cases in which inspectors have been appointed has increased significantly over the last five years. Half of the prosecutions (and half of the convictions) which have taken place since 1980 occurred in 1989. The DTI

seem to attribute this to an improvement in the quality of the evidence. They also said that cases in which inspectors have been appointed have resulted in more successful prosecutions than those which have not.

The bare figures for the UK show little investigatory activity in the years after the offence was first introduced and then consolidated, followed by an apparent burst of effort in the last two years. This is a decade after the criminal offence was created. Between 1980 and 1986, it is thought that the Stock Exchange referred about 100 cases to the DTI but only nine

prosecutions resulted. There is no doubt that insider dealing is a difficult offence to prove. It is also the case that the prospects of a successful prosecution are improved by the appointment of inspectors but diminish with time. For these reasons we are astounded that it takes the DTI as long as six months to appoint inspectors. We conclude that the DTI's record over the past 10 years shows dilatoriness in enforcing the insider dealing law.

The experience of recent cases certainly points to the inadequacies in the law and inexperience among both prosecutors and courts in dealing with cases.

We welcome the Government's proposal to simplify the law on insider dealing. We do believe however that more consideration needs to be given to the possibility of civil remedies or sanctions for insider dealing.

To date, no one has served a prison sentence for insider dealing. One suspended sentence has been imposed. In six of the eight convictions secured by the end of November 1989, it is estimated that the fine exceeded the profit made or the loss avoided. While the prospects of detection and prosecution may act as a deterrent, we do not consider that the penalties actually imposed do serve to dissuade people from insider dealing. We see no reason why loss of livelihood and reputation should be seen as an alternative to imprisonment. Some custodial sentences would send a strong message that insider dealing is not acceptable conduct in the City or elsewhere.

A procedure analogous to that used by the Inland Revenue, especially for stamp duty, could be used. When the DTI has received a report from the Stock Exchange on insider dealing it could require the person concerned to answer questions (subject to the normal protections). On the basis of these a statement of facts could be served on him. If he did not dispute them he could pay a fixed penalty. If he

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did dispute them, he could appeal to the courts, which would have the option of imposing a larger penalty. We believe in practice that most cases would be settled at an initial stage.

We recommend that consideration should be given to attacking insider abuse in the UK not merely under the Company Securities (Insider Dealing) Act.

The DTI has a poor record on insider dealing, but is showing signs of improvement. What is particularly alarming is its speed of response to a new offence. The DTI's regulatory record in dealing with new developments is not impressive. If it takes 10 years to start to get to grips with one new offence, what can be expected of it as new schemes of commercial malpractice are invented?

We recommend that all insider dealing cases should be referred to the time being to the Stock Exchange judges experienced in commercial law at a specified court.

We recommend that the DTI should decide within 21 days of cases being referred to them by the Stock Exchange whether (1) to appoint inspectors or (2) to allow the Stock Exchange to prosecute.

We recommend that steps be taken to introduce civil law sanctions against insider dealing.

EXPENDITURE

The total cost of DTI investigations in 1988-89 was £6.2 million, although the costs to DTI investigations are met by monies voted by Parliament, the income from Companies Act fees and charges are set to recover the costs arising from the regulation of companies, including the costs of investigations.

A major investigation is expensive: the three major investigations completed recently each cost between £1.1 and £1.6 million. £2.9 million was spent in this way in 1988-89. An insider dealing investigation costs on average £100,000. £1.4 million was spent on this in 1988-89.

The DTI has limited powers to recover the costs of investigations under the Companies Act 1989 but does not expect to recover much.

We recommend that greater steps be taken to recover the costs of investigations from the companies and individuals, unless the inspectors find no evidence of wrong-doing.

DTI

Much of our evidence relates to events which occurred before the implementation of the Financial Services Act 1986, the creation of the Serious Fraud Office in 1988 and the enactment of the Companies Act in 1989. While these recent developments have significantly changed the situation, we are not convinced that they have been established.

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did dispute them, he could appeal to the courts, which would have the option of imposing a larger penalty. We believe in practice that most cases would be settled at an initial stage.

We recommend that the DTI response is that such conduct could already be taken into account by the court in determining a person's unfitness. But the court can only take such matters into account if the Secretary of State decides to apply to the case to the court.

It is highly disingenuous of the DTI's evidence to use this excuse for not seeking an amendment to the law when the Secretary of State has prevented such a course being followed by not referring the case to the court.

We believe that if the company investigation system is to work properly, there should be effective sanctions against those who mislead inspectors. Disqualification as a director is one option, but would not cover all individuals. Mr Ridley did not accept the inspectors' recommendation that punitive sanctions should be made available in the event that false information is furnished to inspectors. The reason given is that section 1 of the Perjury Act 1911 covers such an eventuality. We conclude that the HoF case demonstrates that the sanctions against inspectors are inadequate.

We recommend that company law be amended to provide that:

- (1) If inspectors report that directors have given false information to them, the Secretary of State should automatically apply to the court for their disqualification.

(2) Knowingly or recklessly misleading inspectors should be made an offence.

We recommend that the Secretary of State should report within two months on the action taken by the various bodies to whom he sent the HoF report.

Courts should have ruled on Fayeds' fitness as directors

HOUSE OF FRASER

WE have been greatly concerned at the lack of government action following publication of the inspectors' report on HoF. The acquisition of HoF took place in 1984 and 1985 when Mr Norman Tebbit, MP, was Secretary of State for Trade and Industry. The next Secretary of State, Mr Leon Brittan, MP, refused to appoint inspectors in 1985. Inspectors were appointed on 9 April 1987 by Mr Paul Channon, MP. They reported on 27 July 1988 to Lord Young. Their report was published on 7 March 1990 by Mr Nicholas Ridley, MP. Thus five successive Secretaries of State were involved.

When the inspectors reported and when their report was published there were five ways in which action could have been taken:

- Prosecution of individuals for criminal offences;
- Reference of takeover of HoF by the Fayeds to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission;
- Implementation of recommendations by the inspectors for changes in the law;
- Disciplinary measures by regulatory bodies; and
- Disqualification of directors.

We have considered what steps have been taken under these headings.

We understand that had sufficient corroborative evidence been available, charges might have been brought against the Fayeds brothers under section 15 of the Theft Act 1968, section 5 of the Prevention of Corruption Act 1906, section 3 of the Forgery and Counterfeiting Act 1981 and the common law offence of conspiracy to defraud. Mr



Tebbit: first Secretary of State



Lord Young: prudent to act

Act 1986 gives the Secretary of State power to apply to the court for the disqualification of a director. He can do so if it appears to him expedient in the public interest, following an inspectors' report. The court can disqualify a person where "it is satisfied that his conduct in relation to the company makes him unfit to be concerned in the management of a company as grounds for disqualification. He said in evidence:

"Where I am satisfied that the conduct of the director in relation to the company he is managing — I have added those words — makes him unfit to be concerned in the management of a company, that is the criterion."

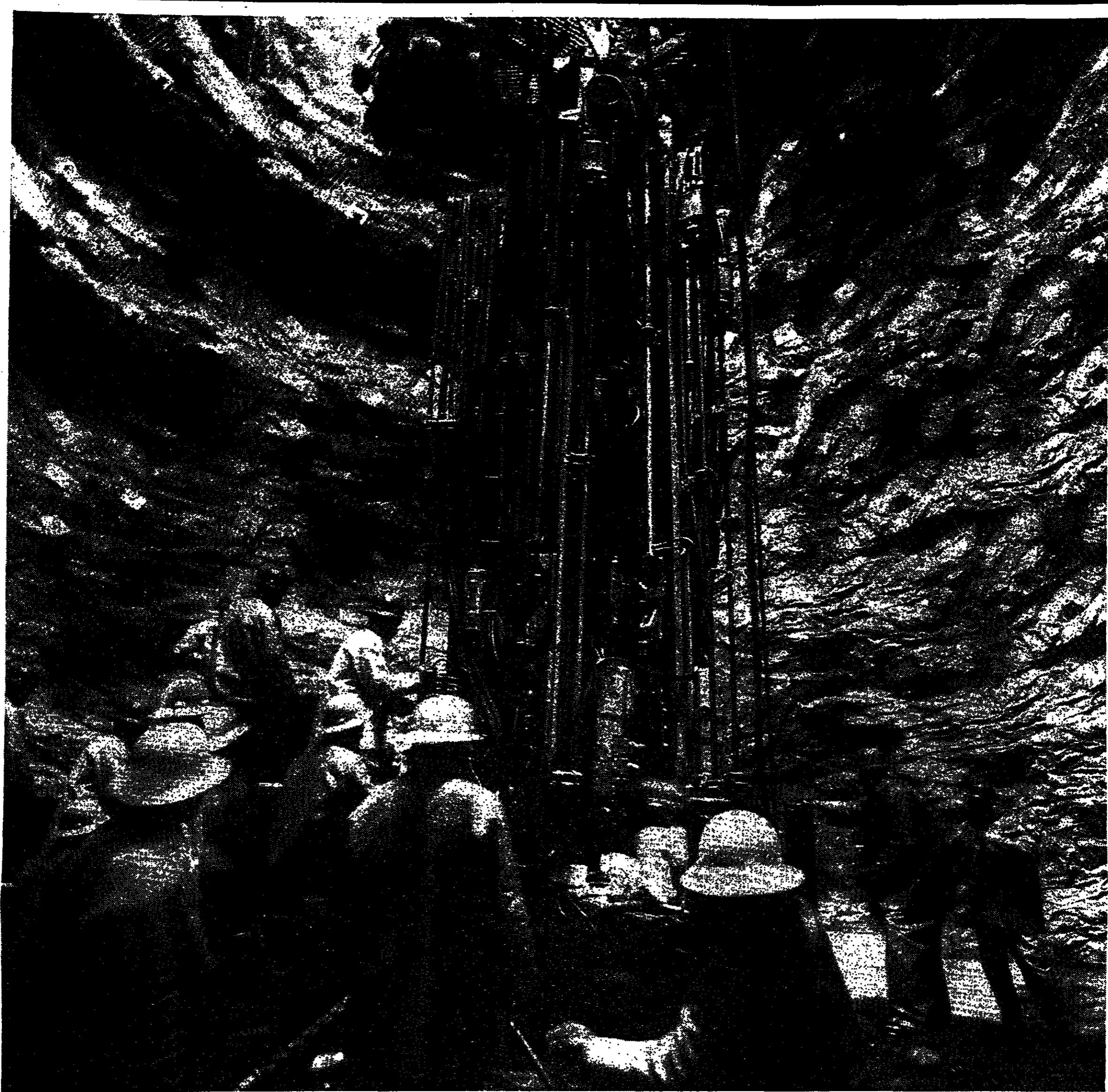
We believe that this construction should have been tested in court.

We therefore conclude that the question whether the Fayeds should be disqualified as directors should have been put to the courts to decide. The merits of the case would have been argued in public and decided on the basis of the law. By not applying to the court the Secretary of State blocked off the one remaining means by which some penalty could have been imposed on the Fayeds for their conduct.

The contradictory position adopted by Mr Ridley on the question of disqualification is illustrated by the failure to implement one of the inspectors' recommendations for a change in the law. The inspectors recommended that:

"The giving of false evidence to Companies Act inspectors ought to be made in itself a sufficient reason for disqualification."

The Company Directors Disqualification



Drilling is about to commence in this picture of shaft-sinking 1800 metres below the earth at Vaal Reefs' No. 10 shaft.

HOW DEEPLY IS ANGLO AMERICAN COMMITTED TO THE FUTURE OF SOUTH AFRICA?

Very deeply indeed. Nearly two and a half miles deep. This is where, as any miner will tell you, the rocks 'talk,' warning them of what they fear most - rockbursts.

Gold is increasingly being mined at such depths. The challenge is to make its extraction safe and efficient.

Where once miners listened to the rocks, today we have developed sophisticated seismic probes, planted deep into the rock and linked to a computer room on the surface, to detect the slightest tremor.

This is one way Anglo American leads the world in deep level mining technology, expertise which it exports across the globe.

Two and a half miles below the surface, fierce heat is also a constant problem. Here rock reaches temperatures of up to 63°C, hot enough to burn the skin when touched.

To combat this, we have created the largest refrigeration plants in the world, using chilled water and ice

to cool the air and make conditions bearable for the miner to work in.

As well as pioneering mining technology in our present mines, we haven't stopped looking for gold. This year, Anglo is spending R200m. on prospecting for gold in South Africa alone.

You might think that after over a century of mining, gold in South Africa would be running out. On the contrary, we believe that its potential reserves far exceed any known deposits in any other country.

Our activities extend far beyond our gold mines. Anglo American is South Africa's biggest group of companies - with interests that range from diamond, coal and platinum mining to paper, steel, farming and financial services.

We create wealth for our shareholders, and for our workers and their families - a total of

1,500,000 South Africans of all races and colours.

All this shows how deeply rooted we are in South Africa. We intend to stay there and continue investing there. From now until the end of 1992, capital investment should exceed R8 billion.

(In the case of Vaal Reefs, we're planning now for the year 2030.)

But as well as striving to build an economic future, we are also committed to a just, non-racial society within South Africa.

Which is why we will go on investing in its people, funding multi-racial schools and universities, skills training at technical colleges, health clinics and hospitals.

We will continue to encourage share and home ownership amongst our employees. We will help more small businesses by identifying goods and services they can supply.

For by creating not just wealth but opportunity, we can help move towards a fairer, more prosperous, post-apartheid South Africa for us all.

ANGLO AMERICAN CORPORATION OF SOUTH AFRICA

WALL STREET

Dow unmoved by new goods data

New York
SHARE prices were lower in early trade, with much lower-than-expected April US durable goods orders failing to have an impact on the index.

The Dow Jones industrial average was down 6.88 points at 2,845.35, while declining issues led gains by shares by four to three.

Analysts said that one month's data were not sufficient to show a trend.

● Tokyo — Share prices closed higher, bolstered by Tuesday's overnight record close on Wall Street and the yen's strength

against the dollar. The Nikkei

index surged 238.21 to close at 32,176.51.

● Hong Kong — Shares rallied on hopes that the US would renew China's "most favoured nation" status, seen as crucial to Hong Kong's re-export trade. The Hang Seng index closed 57.44 points higher at 3,028.31.

● Singapore — The Straits Times industrial index fell 5.64 points to 1,572.95.

● Sydney — The All-Ordinaries index ended 8.3 points up at 1,473.7.

● Frankfurt — The 30-share Dax index rose 18.54 points to 1,831.80. (Agencies)

STOCK MARKET

Concern over trade deficit knocks 23 points off index

THE stock market took more than an hour to work out that April's trade deficit of £1.78 billion was one bad economic indicator that could not be ignored.

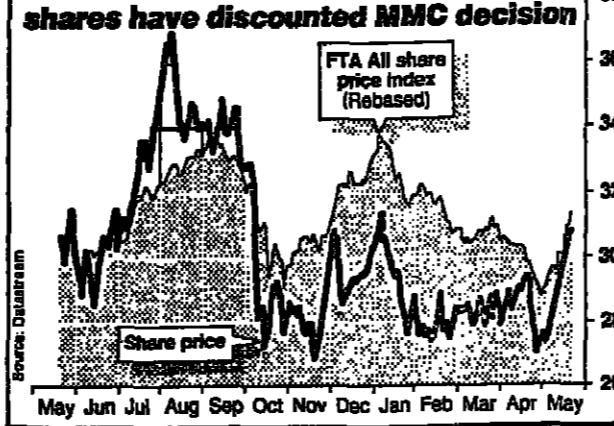
Initially, it looked as if the bulls were going to win the day. In busy trading, the FTSE 100 index took a 20-point lead by 11am, with dealers reporting some institutions keen to buy stock.

The trade figures were announced at 11.30am and in the 15 minutes that followed, prices came sharply back. However, the market quickly regained its nerve and for about an hour it looked as if the trade figures were going to join retail prices and unemployment figures as key indicators that could safely be ignored.

But then the market's nerve cracked. A weak opening on Wall Street and late speculation of a profits downgrading for the high street banks did nothing to halt the slide. The FTSE 100 index closed 23.9 points lower at 2,287.4, while the FT-30 index slid 19.5 to 1,810.0. Although turnover failed to keep up with the heady levels of recent days, about 342 million shares changed hands.

The market's switch of direction coincided with the suspension of dealings in Dixons, the electrical retailer, and its would-be owner Kingfisher. The shares were suspended when it became known that copies of the Mergers and Monopolies

KINGFISHER: shares have discounted MMC decision



Commission report recommending that the £568 million bid be blocked were already available.

Deals resumed about 50 minutes later after Mr Nicholas Ridley, the Trade Secretary, confirmed the MMC's decision. Dixons fell 7p to 124p, while Kingfisher put on 3p to 311p. Mr Paul Morris, a

share analyst at Goldman Sachs, pointed out that Kingfisher's price had been anticipating the bid being blocked for some time.

Talk of a profits downgrading hit the high street banks in late trading. Barclays fell 15p to 544, Lloyds was 12p lower at 265p, while Midland

sharply increased borrowing costs. But further consideration of the group's interim pre-tax profits of £247 million saw this trend reversed. Bass closed 14p higher at £10.63.

Ranks Hovis McDougall plunged 38p to 360p as the company announced worse-than-expected interim profits

Matthew Bond

of £81.7 million with a warning that the company is unlikely to match last year's record profits of £176 million. Wellcome, the drugs group, fell 10p to 659p on profit-taking. Fisons also reversed its recent trend by falling 13p to 358p.

An increase in net asset value of 2.1 per cent might not sound that inspiring, but in the punch-drunk property sector this sort of progress from Land Securities provided an unexpected fillip.

Land Securities celebrated with a dignified rise of 3p to

499p.

Elsewhere, Bass the brewer, had a see-saw day, initially falling on news of its plans to close off 2,400 pubs and its

share price

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THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

UNLISTED SECURITIES																			
1990		Price		Gross		Yd		P/E		1990		Price		Gross		Yd		P/E	
High	Low	Company	Bid	Offer	Chg	Chg %	Chg %	Chg %	High	Low	Company	Bid	Offer	Chg	Chg %	Chg %	Chg %		
81	85	ASD	78	83	+3	4%	5%	5%	165	175	Great Southern	175	185	+8	+2	+2%	+2%	172	175
51	41	ATL Selectors	40	45	+5	5%	5%	5%	215	225	Green (Ernest)	215	225	+2	+2%	+2%	+2%	215	225
14	14	Averitas Plc	12	15	+3	-1%	-1%	-1%	125	135	Green Goddess	125	135	+2	+2%	+2%	+2%	125	135
77	71	Acu	25	34	+9	+11%	+11%	+11%	150	160	Hedge Fund	150	160	+12	+12%	+12%	+12%	150	160
16	16	Acus Group	12	12	+1	-1%	-1%	-1%	125	135	Hedge Fund	125	135	+12	+12%	+12%	+12%	125	135
12	12	Acu Plc	12	12	+1	-1%	-1%	-1%	125	135	Hedge Fund	125	135	+12	+12%	+12%	+12%	125	135
119	123	ADL	12	12	+1	-1%	-1%	-1%	125	135	Hedge Fund	125	135	+12	+12%	+12%	+12%	125	135
47	47	ADL Assets	12	12	+1	-1%	-1%	-1%	125	135	Hedge Fund	125	135	+12	+12%	+12%	+12%	125	135
47	47	Antony Blair St	12	12	+1	-1%	-1%	-1%	125	135	Hedge Fund	125	135	+12	+12%	+12%	+12%	125	135
14	14	Apple Watch Prod	12	12	+1	-1%	-1%	-1%	125	135	Hedge Fund	125	135	+12	+12%	+12%	+12%	125	135
25	25	Apparel Holdings	12	12	+1	-1%	-1%	-1%	125	135	Hedge Fund	125	135	+12	+12%	+12%	+12%	125	135
319	319	Apparel Cos	12	12	+1	-1%	-1%	-1%	125	135	Hedge Fund	125	135	+12	+12%	+12%	+12%	125	135
48	48	Apparel	12	12	+1	-1%	-1%	-1%	125	135	Hedge Fund	125	135	+12	+12%	+12%	+12%	125	135
25	25	Apparel Entertain	12	12	+1	-1%	-1%	-1%	125	135	Hedge Fund	125	135	+12	+12%	+12%	+12%	125	135
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- MEDICINE: DRUG CONTROVERSY
- SCIENCE: 'MAD COW' RISK

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

A cosmic trail with destruction in its wake

Are we too complacent about the threat of space debris hitting Earth? Nick Nuttall reports on what some astronomers say will be Armageddon

Over the next few weeks the Taurid stream, a procession of vast cosmic rubble and dust that snakes around the Sun and out towards Jupiter, will swing through Earth's orbit for the first of its bi-annual crossings.

Within the stream are probably thousands of bodies including asteroids, mountain- and island-sized boulders, smaller meteoroids, Encke's Comet and assorted fragments of celestial refuse.

The exact number, size and location of objects, however, remains a mystery and according to Dr Mark Bailey, research Fellow in astronomy at Manchester University, it is likely that for every object which is confirmed, there are nine others that have so far eluded detection.

All that is certain is that the rubble, believed by some astronomers to have been formed by a collision in the asteroid belt of a defunct comet which was captured by the solar system up to 30,000 years ago, will bisect Earth's orbit in late June and again in November.

According to astronomers such as Dr Victor Clube, of Oxford University's Department of Astrophysics, the coming and going of the Taurid stream should be a source of concern to politicians, planners and anyone who cherishes life on Earth.

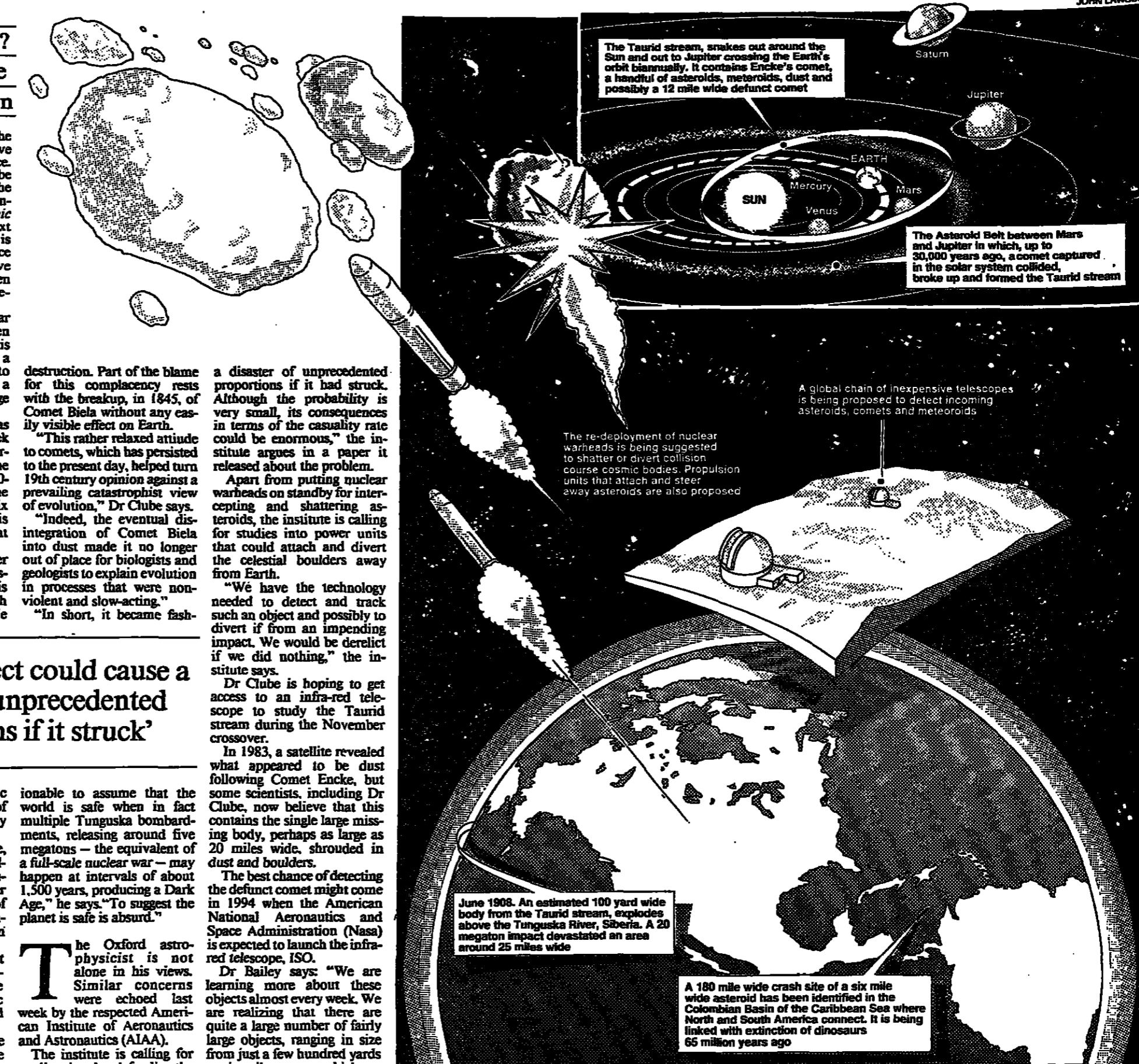
A "catastrophist", Dr Clube is one of many astronomers who are convinced that within this celestial procession lie the seeds of mass destruction—an Armageddon of biblical proportions. "The matter requires urgent attention. It is crucial that everyone is woken up to the danger," Dr Clube says.

The chilling scenario envisaged is of Earth and one of the 46,000 mph objects in the Taurid stream colliding during one of the orbital crossings.

Dr Clube says: "It is analogous to a nuclear war with a megatonnage of the same order and all the effects of nuclear war with debris from the impact causing sunlight to be blocked causing a Dark Age or Ice Age."

He has coined the phrase "Multiple Tunguska Bombardment" to describe the worst nightmare which, he believes, will eventually happen. Tunguska refers to a Siberian River near which, in June 1908, a 100 yard body from the Taurid stream ploughed into Earth, exploding and devastating an area 25 miles wide with the impact of a 20-megaton bomb.

Fortunately the encounter occurred in an unpopulated part of the globe but if the impact had been on London it would have devastated the



Averting destruction: some scientists believe missiles could be used to break up the asteroids before they reach Earth

city, killing millions. The Tunguska event may have been only a chance occurrence. Yet, according to Dr Clube and Dr Bill Napier, of the Royal Observatory in Edinburgh, whose book *Cosmic Winter* is published next month, the history of Earth is littered with subtle evidence that cosmic debris have consistently intervened, often with catastrophic consequences.

One of the most popular theories to explain the sudden demise of the dinosaurs is that, 65 million years ago, a huge asteroid ploughed into the planet, triggering either a nuclear-style winter or huge fires.

This popular theory was given a boost only last week when scientists at the University of Arizona reported the discovery of an apparent 180-mile-wide crash site in the Caribbean of an asteroid six miles wide. They claim this could be linked with the great reptiles' extinction.

Dr Clube ascribes other events including the Old Testament story of Noah and his Ark to a Dark Age linked with colliding heavenly bodies. He

argues that the blame for this complacency rests with the breakup, in 1845, of Comet Biela without any easily visible effect on Earth.

"This rather relaxed attitude to comets, which has persisted to the present day, helped turn 19th century opinion against a prevailing catastrophist view of evolution," Dr Clube says.

"Indeed, the eventual disintegration of Comet Biela into dust made it no longer out of place for biologists and geologists to explain evolution in processes that were non-violent and slow-acting."

"In short, it became fish-

destroying. Part of the blame for this complacency rests with the breakup, in 1845, of Comet Biela without any easily visible effect on Earth.

"Although the probability is very small, its consequences in terms of the casualty rate could be enormous," the institute argues in a paper it released about the problem.

Apart from putting nuclear warheads on standby for intercepting and shattering asteroids, the institute is calling for studies into power units that could attach and divert the celestial boulders away from Earth.

"We have the technology

needed to detect and track such an object and possibly to divert it if from an impending impact. We would be derelict if we did nothing," the institute says.

Dr Clube is hoping to get

access to an infra-red telescope to study the Taurid stream during the November crossover.

In 1983, a satellite revealed what appeared to be dust following Comet Encke, but some scientists, including Dr Clube, now believe that this contains the single large missing body, perhaps as large as 20 miles wide, shrouded in dust and boulders.

The best chance of detecting the defunct comet might come in 1994 when the American National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) is expected to launch the infra-red telescope, ISO.

Dr Bailey says: "We are learning more about these objects almost every week. We are realizing that there are quite a large number of fairly large objects, ranging in size from just a few hundred yards to six miles across, which are in Earth's collision orbit."

Along with Dr Bailey, Dr Clube supports the institute's call for improved monitoring. But both British astronomers are concerned at suggestions of shattering incoming celestial bodies.

The call comes in the wake of thawing East-West relations and what is being claimed as a recent, potentially disastrous near-collision.

They believe that there is

the danger that by solving one large threat, it may create scores of smaller ones.

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● *Cosmic Winter* by Dr V Clube and Dr B Napier. Published in June by Basil Blackwell (£16.95). The Origin of Comets by Dr M Bailey, Dr V Clube and Dr B Napier. Pergamon Press.

"Such an object could cause

Weighing up the odds on beef

Is not the "negligible" risk to humans from "mad cow" disease too great a risk to take?

"Mad cow" disease is on the rampage and Britain is once again gripped by a public health disaster. Or perhaps not: the experts disagree— heatedly.

How much is the risk in eating beef? The answer to that question has been obscured by confusion between two types of risk. One is a quantifiable risk, the other is an unknown risk that is estimated by extrapolation or analogy.

There is an important difference between a one in a million chance of a human catching a disease and a one in a million chance that a disease is readily transmissible to humans.

In the first type of risk, a steady but small stream of people will catch the disease. In the second, almost certainly nobody will catch it; but there is a tiny chance that large numbers of people will.

The risks of contracting bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) from beef tend to be presented as if they are known, and small. But it would be more accurate to consider them unknown, and this is where the difficulties lie.

To understand the difference, consider scrapie, a disease said to be similar to BSE that affects sheep, and which has a lot in common with a rare but deadly human disease, Creutzfeldt-Jakob's disease.

Scrapie has long been widespread among British sheep and large numbers of infected sheep make their way to the



Taking precautions: the burning carcasses of cows infected with the disease

table. The incidence of Creutzfeldt-Jakob's disease is about 30 cases per year.

There is no known link between the two diseases, but the possibility has not been ruled out. Both have been around long enough for it to be clear that the risk posed by eating infected sheep is either zero or very small.

BSE is different. It is believed—though unproven—that the BSE outbreak was caused by cattle eating sheep offal which was contaminated with scrapie.

It is therefore believed, but equally unproven, that the two diseases closely resemble each other. If this is true, then, even if BSE could be transmitted to humans, it would be safe to eat beef.

It might be best to avoid products made from brain, meat around the spinal cord, and other offal, because those are the tissues where the disease appears to concentrate, but even then the risk would be minor. This presumed analogy

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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

A dose of economy

As a drug that can transform the lives of thousands of kidney patients was approved for prescription by the Department of Health this week, a controversy grew over its availability.

The drug is erythropoietin, or EPO, which is hailed by doctors as one of the most important advances for many years in the treatment of anaemia, a serious and common side-effect of chronic renal failure.

The dispute is over its cost. A year's treatment adds up to about £5,000 per patient – too much in the department's view for extra funding from central government to regional health authorities. The result, according to specialists, is that many patients are being denied a medicine from which they would benefit dramatically.

"This represents a serious failure to respond to the health needs of very ill patients who require technologically expensive treatment," says Dr Malcolm Phillips, consultant physician and nephrologist at Charing Cross Hospital, west London.

What is EPO, how does it work, and is it as beneficial as its advocates claim? The drug is a genetically engineered version of erythropoietin, a hormone produced in the kidney which stimulates the production of red blood cells in bone marrow. Usually, the hormone is secreted in response to a reduced oxygen level in blood delivered to the kidney.

When damage to the kidney

Thomson Prentice
reports on a cheaper
way to administer the
controversial anaemia
drug which costs
£5,000 per patient

occurs, the levels of EPO manufactured by it are reduced substantially, leading to anaemia. This, in turn, causes chronic tiredness, diminished ability to work, breathlessness, headache, depression and menstrual irregularities.

The drug simply takes over the kidney's impaired function. Given intravenously, it effectively combats anaemia in much the same way as insulin injections help diabetics overcome their condition.

The drug was developed in the mid-Eighties after scientists succeeded in isolating the EPO gene. Researchers had established, in the previous 20 years, that the hormone was produced by the kidney and acted on bone marrow to stimulate and control the production of red blood cells, which transport oxygen around the body.

Molecular biologists were able to synthesize the hormone, and four years ago the drug went into production. Studies showed that it could completely reverse anaemia in patients with kidney failure.

"There is no doubt that at present, some deserving kidney

of Britain's 72 kidney dialysis centres, but only on a restricted, "named patient" basis.

Earlier this week, regulatory authorities at the Department of Health concluded from stringent scrutiny of the drug's data that it could be licensed for general use, bringing EPO a tantalizing step closer to many of the 7,500 kidney patients on dialysis machines.

However, faced with an increased bill of about £10 million a year if it were to be made available to all, the department has written to all regional health authorities warning them that they must pay for the drug from their own already overstretched resources.

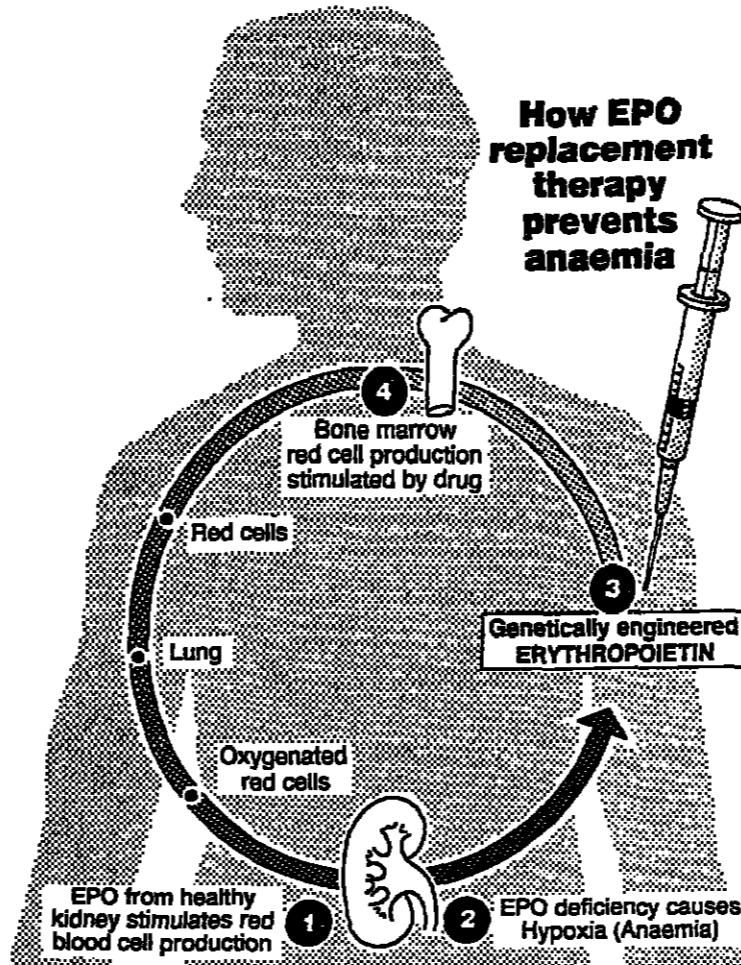
"The Government has boasted that the health service is safe in its hands," Dr Phillips says. "Regrettably, we do not at present have confidence that this applies to patients with kidney failure."

Yesterday, a glimmer of hope emerged. Doctors at South Cleveland Hospital, in Middlesbrough, reported that they had devised a successful and cost-effective way of administering the drug by injecting it under the skin, rather than intravenously, in much smaller doses than were used previously.

"This means that a larger number of patients can receive EPO, with a similar improvement in anaemia and in the quality of life of the patient," says Dr Marion Stevens, senior registrar in renal medicine at the hospital.

patients are not getting the drug because it is so expensive. We have shown that by delivering it in a different way, using smaller amounts, more patients can benefit."

She and other specialists say patients given EPO show remarkable improvements. Many have regained enough energy to return to work, thus reducing the burden on the health service. More studies will be necessary to confirm the cost-effectiveness of subcutaneous injections before this method of treatment is adopted widely. In the meantime, doctors are continuing to press the department for a change in attitude towards subsidizing the cost of the drug.



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Sudan hit by quake

One of the largest earthquakes on record, 10 times bigger than the one that hit San Francisco last year, occurred last Sunday in Sudan.

Fortunately the epicentre of the quake, which registered 7.5 on the Richter scale, was in a remote area 60 miles northeast of Juba, southern Sudan's largest city with a population of more than 250,000.

But the event dramatically highlights the fact that such quakes can occur in places that are not traditionally recognized as earthquake-prone belts, such as the San Andreas fault.

"This was an extremely dangerous earthquake," geologist Rashad Kebeasy, president of Egypt's National

Research Institute of Astronomy and Geophysics, said. "It is the first time that such a quake has struck this area."

Mr Kebeasy, an expert on earthquakes of northeast Africa, said the epicentre was west of the Great African Rift.

That earthquake zone stretches 4,000 miles from Mozambique through the Red Sea to Lebanon. Its proximity to the rift accounts for the quake's ferocity.

The Richter scale is a gauge of the energy released by an earthquake as measured by the ground motion recorded on a seismograph.

Every increase of one number, say from magnitude 5.5 to magnitude 6.6, means that the ground motion is 10 times greater.

During the live programme, students will be able to phone in questions which will be dealt with immediately on screen. Teletext material will be sent to the students' system via the cable network.

LESLIE TILLEY

A product about to be launched in Japan could start a boom in electronic books

Moving stories

Computers in Japan may soon be reading computerized books little larger than a paperback but able to store the equivalent of thousands of pages on each of the small compact discs it uses (Matthew May writes).

Sony hopes the £230 Data Discman will start a boom of electronic books that could eventually rival the success of the personal cassette player.

Customers will not be able to store their own information in Data Discman, but each 3in compact disc – the size currently used for CD singles – will be able to store more than 200 megabytes, the equivalent of more than 3,000 pages of text. Data Discman, which includes a keyboard and flip-up liquid crystal display screen, can be connected to a television set. It also plays the

music version of the CD single.

The keyboard can be used to select particular entries or portions of the text from indexes displayed on the screen.

"This system is designed to make information as easily accessible as playing a CD," Sony said. The screen displays only 10 lines of 15 characters at a time, so how easy a novel will be to read is arguable.

When the £1b Discman goes on sale in Japan in July, it will come with only one disc; that is enough to contain five dictionaries – three Japanese, one English-Japanese and one Japanese-English.

By then a further 18 discs



The £230 Data Discman
compact disc in the same
way as videos.

Customer units such as encyclopedias, on the more common 5in version of a compact disc can cost several hundred pounds.

Data Discman are unlikely to spend large amounts on a single compact disc even if it contains the equivalent of a dozen or more printed books.

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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

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JOBCENE

A new line on home learning

A series of courses on information technology will soon be available on cable television

The programmes are the result of a three-year pilot project into the benefits of home-delivered training (HDT). Also managed by IT World, it was backed by the Department of Trade and Industry in conjunction with the Training Agency and several councils and development groups.

The earlier project was completed late last year and deemed a success by the DTI on the grounds that many students had found jobs after completing the course.

With shortages in experienced IT staff, training firms are looking towards women returners and other groups, such as those living in remote areas, who ideally require training in the home. Technology-based training in the home has become more feasible as the cost of personal computers has fallen.

HDT courses most often take the form of interactive text-based packages on personal computers. These allow students to study where and when they choose and at their own pace.

Although the concept is rapidly gaining the approval of businesses, some training experts have expressed doubts about the benefit of training in the home and recommend that students take courses where a residential element is part of the curriculum. This gives students the opportunity to deal with difficulties on a face-to-face basis.

Choosing which course is the most cost-effective is becoming difficult. The National Council for Educational Technology (NCET) in London (071-222 3312), says 10 places will be offered free.

Cable television, the company says, should make courses more interactive and so overcome the delay and isolation students encounter when working at home, as well as delivering training to people who are unable to travel to courses.

During the live programme, students will be able to phone in questions which will be dealt with immediately on screen. Teletext material will be sent to the students' system via the cable network.

LESLIE TILLEY

Court of Appeal

Law Report May 24 1990

Court of Appeal

Benefit of better stepmother disregarded

Stanley v Sadique
Before Lord Justice Purchas, Lord Justice Ralph Gibson and Sir David Croom-Johnson [Judgment May 18]

The benefit accruing to a minor, whose unreliable mother was killed in a road accident caused by the negligence of the defendant, through his father's marriage to a more reliable woman who provided a higher standard of motherly services, was a benefit which should be disregarded under section 4 of the Fatal Accidents Act 1976, as amended by section 3(1) of the Administration of Justice Act 1982.

It could not be said that there was no loss of dependency to the minor. However, the deceased mother's shortcomings was a matter which should be taken into account when calculating the damages for loss of dependency.

The Court of Appeal stated allowing an appeal by the defendant, Mohammad Sadique, from a decision of Mr Justice Mortimer, who on July 13, 1989 awarded damages £24,526 to the plaintiff minor, David Dean Stanley, suing by his father and next friend, David John Stanley, who was not married to his deceased mother, Elaine Stoddard.

Mr Richard Clegg, QC and Mr Nicholas Worsley for the defendant; Mr Peter Ashworth, QC and Mr Anthony Hughes, QC for the plaintiff minor.

LORD JUSTICE PURCHASES said the basis of the claim was the minor's dependency on his mother who was then married to a Frederick Stoddard by whom she had three children.

In 1982 the mother began an association with the minor's

father who was divorced. That summer she left her children and went to Blackpool with the minor's father.

In December 1983 the minor was born. At the time of the mother's death on March 24, 1984 the father looked after the minor.

In June 1984 the father met a woman called Tracy and they married in November 1984 after which they moved into Tracy's flat. Tracy had a daughter of her own and a son was subsequently born to the father and Tracy in 1985.

The judge found that after his marriage to Tracy the father settled down and was a good father to the minor. He also found that Tracy was providing excellent motherly services to the minor which were of a higher quality than could foreseeably be expected to have been provided by the minor's mother.

The judge found that the motherly services likely to have been provided by the mother would have been of an indifferent quality and lacking in consistency and that some indication of her reliability as a mother was the fact that she left her three young children, one handicapped and one extremely young, for an irresponsible relationship with the minor's father in Blackpool.

Based on those findings the first contention of the defendants was that as the minor was better off in the home provided by his father and Tracy than he would ever have been with his mother there was no loss of dependency and, therefore, no damages to be awarded under the Act.

The judge did not accept that contention but calculated a loss

of dependency adopting the multiplier/multiplicand approach: see *Spittle v Bunney* ([1988] 1 WLR 847).

The judge concluded that the benefit accruing from the home consisting of the father, Tracy and their children was excluded by section 4 of the 1976 Act, as amended. That was the first ground of attack on appeal: The problem was one of construction.

The problem was to decide whether in construing section 4 there was any justification for construing the words "benefits which have accrued or will or may accrue to any person from his estate or otherwise as a result of his death" shall be disregarded" as in any way being restricted or whether they should be given the full ambit of the word "otherwise".

Mr Clegg suggested that the exclusion should be restricted to direct pecuniary benefits. However, if that course was taken the word "otherwise" would not be sufficiently wide to reinstate the various rights which had been progressively introduced since the Fatal Accidents (Damages) Act 1908 culminating in sections 1 to 4 of the 1976 Act which were wholly replaced by section 3(1) of the 1982 Act.

As a result of the passage of the 1982 Act none of the pre-existing statutory exemptions from the deductions of benefits from fatal accidents Acts damages survived unless it was through the medium of the word "otherwise".

It seemed inconceivable that Parliament would have effected a wholesale repeal of all longstanding previous statutory exemptions from the deduction of benefits by a sidewise of that sort.

In his Lordship's judgment, the preferable construction was that by section 4 Parliament intended to further the departure from ordinary common law assessment of damages for personal injuries by the artificial concept which had for many decades been the basis of damages recoverable under the fatal accidents Acts.

The judge was correct in his conclusion that the benefits accruing to the minor as a result of his absorption into the family unit consisting of his father and stepmother and siblings should be wholly disregarded in assessing damages.

The defendants argued that in any event the judge failed properly to take into account his own findings of fact as to the prospects of any substantial benefit which would have been enjoyed by the minor had his mother not died. That really was an attack either on the multiplier or the multiplicand in the computation made by the judge based on *Spittle v Bunney*.

Mr Clegg submitted that in assessing the value of the mother's services at £3,000 a year discounted against the smaller earnings placed on her by the minor as he grew older, the judge failed in taking an overall multiplier of 12 years to represent his age up to 18 to make any proper discount for the real possibility that the mother might, as a result of her own shortcomings, not be available during the full period of 12 years.

He relied on the mother's record in relation to her earlier children and the findings of the judge that the minor's prospects of enjoying any continuing or valuable support from his mother were bleak.

That, Mr Clegg submitted, called for a far more substantial discount either by reducing the multiplicand or, in his Lordship's judgment, more appropriately, the multiplier before reaching the figure which the judge reached of £24,000.

In the end, the assessment of the damages for loss of dependency, as apart from that element of the dependency which could be related to financial support, was a jury question.

His Lordship had no doubt that the judge's computation was plainly too high and was reached on a wrong principle as much as it omitted to make a proper discount for the real possibility that the mother would not have stayed with the family, and that, therefore, that finding could not be upheld on appeal.

The duty of the court was to arrive at a figure which a jury might well have awarded had it taken into account all the circumstances. Such was the lack of steady prospect of support that the multiplier/multiplicand approach was inappropriate.

In carrying out an assessment on a jury award basis, his Lordship reached a figure of £10,000 for loss of services.

That had to be added to the figure of £5,000 for loss of financial support which the judge assessed and which could not be disturbed on appeal. The total award should therefore be £15,000.

Lord Justice Ralph Gibson delivered a concurring judgment and Sir David Croom-Johnson agreed.

Solicitors: Sharpe Pritchard for Howards, Birmingham; Parkinson Wright, Worcester.

Peter Yates & Co v Bullock and Another
Before Lord Justice Nourse and Mr Justice Ward [Judgment May 16]

An estate agent was entitled to receive his commission from a vendor for the introduction of a purchaser if he was the effective cause of the sale taking place.

The completion of the sale transactions by another agent subsequently instructed by the vendor to purchasers introduced by the original agent, did not prevent that original agent from receiving payment.

The Court of Appeal so held in allowing an appeal by the plaintiffs Peter Yates & Co, a firm of estate agents, from the judgment of Judge Sellers in Blackpool County Court in June 1989 dismissing their claim for payment of commission by the defendants, the executors of Mr Ernest Bullock.

The defendants had no doubt that the judge's computation was plainly too high and was reached on a wrong principle as much as it omitted to make a proper discount for the real possibility that the mother would not have stayed with the family, and that, therefore, that finding could not be upheld on appeal.

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Lord Justice Ralph Gibson delivered a concurring judgment and Sir David Croom-Johnson agreed.

Solicitors: Sharpe Pritchard for Howards, Birmingham; Parkinson Wright, Worcester.

LORD JUSTICE NOURSE said that in 1987 the plaintiffs received oral instructions from Mr Bullock to sell the Westmoreland Hotel, Queens Promenade, Blackpool.

The agreement was evidenced by a letter from the plaintiffs to Mr Bullock thanking him for his "most favoured instructions to act as agents in offering your property for sale at the sum of £150,000". Commission was agreed at one and a half percent.

The plaintiffs marketed the hotel and showed the property to a number of persons, including Mr and Mrs Duxbury. On three further occasions they had visited the property before making an offer worth just under £124,000.

Following advice from the plaintiffs to hold out for more, Mr Bullock had refused the offer. Clearly, however, between

the two parties there was a dispute as to whether the chain of causation had been broken.

Mr Justice Ward gave a concurring judgment.

Solicitors: Edwin Cee for Aspinwall, Whiteside, Blackpool; Edwin Cee for Roland Robinson & Featons, Blackpool.

First estate agent entitled to his commission

"What you are looking for is the leading or bringing in of the purchaser to that transaction. That makes it clear that first acquaintance is not paramount and it explains why the test is expressed by reference to the effective cause of the transaction."

The defendants relied on that passage, contending that the admitted introduction of the Duxburies to the property was not paramount or conclusive and that as the plaintiffs had not introduced Mrs Hume and after April 24 had played no effective part at all, the judge was right to conclude as he had.

His Lordship said that although the introduction of the Duxburies by the plaintiffs was not decisive, the judge's conclusion could not be upheld.

Each such case depended on its facts and any different combination of facts might be available to show which of two firms of agents was the effective cause of a sale. The valid question was that asked by Mr Henrie: what would the position have been if Kays had never come into the matter?

Had the Duxburies and Mrs Hume gone personally to Mr Bullock and said that they were willing and able to put up the £135,000, clearly the plaintiffs, who had done a lot of spade work, would have been entitled to commission.

The question then to be asked was whether the appearance of Kays on the scene had broken the chain of causation because of what they had done as regards the eventual purchaser. There was no evidence of any effective party to Kays beyond their being in command for the successful offer of the chain of causation had not been broken by them.

Mr Justice Ward gave a concurring judgment.

Solicitors: Edwin Cee for Aspinwall, Whiteside, Blackpool; Edwin Cee for Roland Robinson & Featons, Blackpool.

Delay reflected in child's damages award for lost mother

Corbett v Barking, Havering and Brentwood Health Authority
Before Lord Justice Purchas, Lord Justice Ralph Gibson and Lord Justice Farquharson [Judgment May 18]

Where on a claim for damages by an infant dependent under the Fatal Accidents Act 1976 for the loss of the support of his mother there was a long delay before an award was made, the court was entitled to take account of the delay and to allow some adjustment for it when fixing the multiplier as at the date of death.

The Court of Appeal by a majority (Lord Justice Ralph Gibson dissenting) so stated allowing an appeal on that issue by the infant plaintiff, Richard Brian Corbett, suing by his father and next friend, Brendan Desmond Corbett, from the decision of Judge Hayman sitting as a deputy High Court judge on June 3, 1989. The defendants were granted leave to appeal to the House of Lords.

The plaintiff's claim was against the defendants, Barking, Havering and Brentwood Health Authority, in negligence for causing the death of his mother while giving birth to him. Liability was disputed until just before the trial when it was admitted and the trial proceeded on the question of damages. At the date of the trial the plaintiff was eleven and a half years old.

Mr Harvey McGregor, QC and Mr Roderick Doggett for the plaintiff; Mr Jonathan Playford, QC and Mr Terence Coghlan for the defendants.

4 The possibility of the needs of the dependent being altered by the changes and chances of life, again in a positive or negative way.

5 An actuarial discount to compensate (i) for immediate receipt of compensatory damages in advance of the date when the loss would in fact have been incurred, and (ii) that the capital should be exhausted at the end of the period of dependency.

That exercise was permissible when assessing the multiplicand in the normal case went by default because the critical period to be considered in computing the multiplier was (a) rather than (b).

Frequently when (b) was larger than (a) the period over which the receipt of compensation was advanced was substantial and the element of that in the discount in (c) would also be substantial.

When, however, (b) represented a very short period there would not be much discount from the remaining years to the age of 18. In addition the further discount arising from (d) would also be small.

If those factors were put into the equation when assessing (c) as at the date of death, they must result in a substantial increase in the multiplier assessed as at the date of death.

That was not the same exercise as that which the Court of Appeal carried out in calculating the multiplier as at the date of trial in *Graham v Dodd*, since it still took into account the uncertainties surrounding the hypothetical survival of the provider of the support.

The failure to do that was the main ground for the rejection of the Court of Appeal's approach in *Graham v Dodd* by Lord Bridge of Harwich. It was for that reason that his Lordship disagreed with Lord Justice Ralph Gibson that *Graham v Dodd* was wrong.

There was no justification for

Dodd's prevented the court from adjusting the multiplier to take into account the facts arising from the delay before the trial took place. For the same reasons his Lordship could not agree that the judge's finding of the multiplier at 12 should not be disturbed.

It was common ground that either 12 or 13 would have been the appropriate multiplier to cover 18 years dependency in normal circumstances. Not to make a meaningful adjustment because during 11½ of the 18 years of dependency upon which the discounts in (b) would normally be applied but which no longer contain uncertainties would be illogical.

It did in the present case lead to the bizarre position where the dependency of a normal healthy individual was discounted to six months. In *Graham v Dodd* the resolution of the use of the multiplier in circumstances such as the present case was never directly in issue.

For those reasons the judge fixed a multiplier which was demonstrably too low and it was open to the court to use its own discretion and to substitute a multiplier of its own taking into account the facts available at the trial. His Lordship would award an uplift in the multiplier to take into account all adjustments to 15.

Lord Justice Ralph Gibson delivered a dissenting judgment and Lord Justice Farquharson delivered a judgment concurring with Lord Justice Purchas.

Solicitors: Thompson Smith & Puxon, Colchester; Beachcroft Stanley.

March 22, 1973 the ceiling was lifted from £600 and from April 1, 1973 to £1,500.

If the rateable value of Longton Place exceeded those limits the tenant was not protected. If the value dipped below on any one of those days the tenant was protected.

On April 1, 1963 the rateable value of the property was £680, it remained at that figure on March 23, 1965 and at March 22, 1973. By the last date, the tenant had made a proposal dated November 19, 1972 to reduce the rateable value. On the new list dated April 1, 1973 the property was valued at £1,763 and on July 9, 1973 the tenant made a further proposal to reduce the value to £1,600.

In fact, both the valuations were flawed and by an agreement dated October 29, 1973 in relation to any dwelling-house which, on March 23, 1965 and at March 22, 1973. By the last date, the tenant had made a proposal dated November 19, 1972 to reduce the rateable value. On the new list dated April 1, 1973 the property was valued at £1,763 and on July 9, 1973 the tenant made a further proposal to reduce the value to £1,600.

Section 25 of the 1977 Act provides: "(3) In this Act the 'appropriate day' – (a) in relation to any dwelling-house which the tenant is in force, means that date, and (b) in relation to any other dwelling-house, means the date on which such a value is or was first shown in the valuation list.

"(4) Where, after the date which is the appropriate day in relation to any dwelling-house, the valuation list is altered so as to vary the rateable value of the hereditament of which the dwelling-house consists or forms part and the alteration has effect from a date not later than the appropriate day, the rateable value of the dwelling-house on the appropriate day shall be ascertained as if the value shown in the valuation list on the appropriate day was the value shown in the valuation list on the date in force.

Mr Paul Morgan for the landlords; Mr David Neuberger, QC and Mr Nicholas Dowling for the tenant.

MR JUSTICE ALIOTT said that there were two principal issues: (i) was the tenancy protected by the 1977 Act in his occupation of 23 Longton Place, and (ii) if he was not, was the landlord estopped from contending that the tenant was not protected.

It was common ground that on March 23, 1965 (the "appropriate day") the rateable value of the property for protection under the Rent Act was £400. As from

the expiry of that 56-day period the matter could be listed for hearing.

After the expiry of that 56-day period the matter could be listed for hearing.

It was common ground that the rateable value of the property for protection under the Rent Act was £400. As from

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It was common ground that the rateable value of the property for protection under the Rent

Safely ashore at his last port of call, Rothmans' skipper offers his reflections in the wake of a great yachting adventure

Pushing the boat to the limits to keep pace

IT HAS been a great adventure. The highlights have been the excitement of surfing at 30 knots with the boat balanced on a knife-edge between windswept and wipe-out; the anticipation of seeing how the opposition stood after Rothmans made a good day's run; and the welcome we received at each port of call.

The minus points are the worries I have carried with me throughout the 33,000-mile race of losing a man overboard or being dismasted. The disappointment is of finishing fourth.

No one likes to lose but the fact is that Peter Blake and his New Zealand crew on Steinlager 2 never put a foot wrong. Four previous Whitbread campaigns have taught him the importance of preparation and the very different skills employed racing across oceans to round the buoys.

Rothmans launched this campaign a year before the start. We were already a year behind Grant Dalton's Fisher & Paykel programme when Rob Humphreys, Rothmans designer, drew the first lines of the hull.

With the drawings required a month later, there was little time for research and development and even less to study the weather patterns around the world to the extent we now know is required. We chose a sloop rig because it was the simple proven option.

The first warning that a ketch might be the faster choice came when we obtained the performance data of Steinlager and Fisher from a normally reliable source shortly after Rothmans' launch when there were only five months to the start of the race.

The information suggested that both ketches were five per cent faster when sailing off the wind and similar in performance upwind and down. This was then confirmed during the Fastnet race in August, just six weeks before the start of the Whitbread, when the two ketches finished just minutes apart, leaving Rothmans to trail in third 40 minutes astern.

It was only then that we began to appreciate the full extent of



Lawrie Smith

The skipper of Rothmans concludes his special report to The Times on the Whitbread Round the World Race.

what we were up against and the uphill battle we would have to wage to keep on level terms. Many people have asked me since why we did not add a mizzen-mast to Rothmans, but the simple fact is that it was impossible, having once decided to build a shorter, lighter design to the Kiwi ketches.

Also, there was no time to optimize the sails or learn to get the most from the rig during the short period we had to work the yacht up. Instead, we worked to improve on the design of our spinnakers and genoas, successfully closing the one fifth of knot speed advantage Pierre Fehlmann's Swiss ketch, Merit, displayed when reaching during the Fastnet race.

From that point on, we knew that the risk-taking would be ours. While Blake and Dalton eased up in heavy weather, we had to push Rothmans to the limits all the time, just to keep pace. There was no point, either, in following in their wake.

We had to break away in the hope of experiencing better winds elsewhere and the closer we came to the finish, the greater the gambles we had to take. Another aspect that did not help our cause was the very calm weather experienced during Rothmans trials last summer.

Indeed, the first heavy weather experienced hit us with a vengeance during the first week of the race as we led Steinlager past Cape Finisterre. The gale hit with such intensity that we were caught in the 50-knot blast with full mainsail and a spinnaker set and no immediate means of getting them down.

I had never been so apprehen-



Bow and scrape: Lawrie Smith points to the damage caused to Rothmans by an unknown object during the final leg of the Whitbread Round the World Race

sive. Running wildly out of control, we had no idea whether the rig would stand the pressure or come tumbling down so soon in the race. Eventually, we regained control and gybed back towards the rhumb-line course while Steinlager and Merit surged on 30

degrees off course but into a better wind wall in mid-Atlantic.

That was our second mistake. During the first leg we spent our time looking for short-term gains from the weather, rather than taking a longer view and eventually ran out of wind off the Cape

Verde Islands while Steinlager, Merit and Fisher & Paykel surged on 200 miles further out in the Atlantic.

The third mistake was to push the boat too hard in the head winds met off Uruguay. Crashing off one particularly steep swell, the

boat split open across the deck, forcing us to slow right down.

In the Southern Ocean we found we were in our element. Rothmans was designed to excel in heavy-weather conditions and but for a constant round of breakages to boom and spinnaker

poles we would have undoubtedly beaten the 400-mile-a-day barrier.

Instead, we pressed the boat as hard as possible and were level pegging with the ketches right up to the finish line of this longest stage to Fremantle and during the next jump to Auckland.

NETBALL

Hipsey set to tour as team manager

By LOUISE TAYLOR

JILLEAN Hipsey travelled the world during almost 20 years of playing for England, but in July she goes on tour in a new capacity, as the team manager.

The former England captain, now aged 41 but still playing county netball for Essex Metropolitan and at club level, with New Cambell, takes charge of the England Under-21 squad which is bound for Barbados. The British umpire on the tour will be Brenda Hayter, from the West Midlands.

Sandra Price has stepped in to fill the team manager's position for the England senior squad's impending trip to Australia after Joyce Wheeler was forced to withdraw due to family illness.

Like Hipsey, Price, who is from Coventry, will be undertaking her first foreign engagement as team manager. Liz Nicholl, the chief executive of the All England Netball Association (AENA) yesterday welcomed the two appointments.

"It is nice to see overseas opportunities opening out for new people," Nicholl said. "In the past, we have been criticized for not helping newcomers and instead leaving all the attractive foreign trips in the hands of the same small set of people."

Last weekend, the AENA's executive listened to a draft

RUGBY UNION

Scots off to storm wall

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

HOWEVER, unwanted Scotland will carry more than just the hopes of their fellow countrymen when they leave for New Zealand today. The rest of Britain—and France, too, I dare say—will eagerly follow their progress in the hope of detecting signs of structural faults in the four-year-old wall of invincibility with which the All Blacks are surrounded.

Moreover, the two-match international series with the holders of the World Cup will surely be billed down under as the clash of the two hemispheres such as is the penalty of success against England at Murrayfield on March 17 when Scotland scooped the pool—grand slam and five nations' championship.

"We were going to New Zealand long before the developments of this season," Ian McGeechan, Scotland's coach, said but this does not alter the increased load to be borne on the broad shoulders of David Sole and his players, whose achievements this season have generated great interest both within Britain and from exiled Scots all over the world.

Whether recent events in New Zealand assist Scotland remains to be seen. No side can easily afford the loss of a world-class player such as John Gallagher to be paraded tomorrow by

"We get most from our players by touring," McGeechan said. "It is from that we get our strength more than from our

domestic competitions. That is how we have always seen it. To be in that environment as well, in New Zealand, is so valuable that players have to improve. It's the hardest tour you can undertake." If they are to make an impact, too, the Scots will have to develop a broader offensive armoury than they displayed at home in the season just ended.

England, in particular, will watch proceedings with interest because they are in the same World Cup group as New Zealand next year. The Rugby Football Union had technical

observers at many of New Zealand's games during their tour in Wales and Ireland last summer and they will watch eagerly for any newcomers in All Black ranks—and whether such luminaries as Michael Jones and John Kirwan re-emerge after injury. Kirwan, the wing who ruptured an Achilles tendon against Pontypool last October, has played club rugby in Australia this year but has yet to play for his province and observers believe he has lost some of his pace.

• TREVOR Ringland, of the Ballymena club, Ireland's most-capped wing with 34 international appearances, will assist CYMNS next season in a coaching role (George Ace writes).

Romanians seek self-belief

FROM DAVID HANDS, AUCH

mitra at full back, and Rasean, score of three tries from the charity match at Twickenham last month.

But it must help the development of the game in Romania to have a credible role model in the national team. Mihai Niculescu, president of the Romanian federation discussed the planned restructuring of the game yesterday and said: "All roads are open to us now, everything is possible."

Although the federation is still dependent for finance upon the Ministry of Sport, their grant has been considerably increased and they have access to the funds raised by rugby-playing countries all over Europe—

including the £500,000 raised by the charity match at Twickenham last month.

"In the long term we want to develop a national youth rugby centre which would help the introduction of the game into schools," Niculescu said.

There will be exchanges of coaches and referees with other countries and already four coaches from Britain are scheduled to visit Romania in August to help the national side.

• GENEVIEVE COOPER, of the London School, a 10-year-old (G. Cooper), G. Dore (G. Cooper), S. Davies (S. Davies), S. Cooper (S. Cooper), and G. Cooper (G. Cooper), all from Contactors' School, captain. Referee: I. Ballerwell (England).

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RUGBY LEAGUE

A violent shadow over tour victory

FROM PETER WARD
IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

N and Highlands Zones 10
Great Britain 24

A VIOLENT clash between police and rioting supporters cast an ugly shadow over Great Britain's second victory of their tour of Papua New Guinea and New Zealand yesterday.

While the British touring team were beating the Northern and Highlands Zones in Lae, police resorted to firing tear gas at stone and bottle-throwing supporters who had been locked out of the ground.

The players survived intact, as did the takings at the turnstiles, but the longer-term effect on the players involved in a match further scarred by allegation of bias by the referee and by a crowd at near-fever pitch will be worth monitoring.

All who took part stressed what a unique occasion this was. The unfamiliar surroundings, the heat, the police action outside and the partisan crowd combined to turn the match into a battle, not so much physical, since there were no injuries to speak of, as mental. Lindsay suggested that the players had crammed 12 months' experience into one game.

The first half saw an exchange of tries, with the combined side's score in reply to Chris Bibb's try, a more clean-cut affair with their loose forward Eliana, breaking clear to run 40 yards to score. Two goals for

each side meant a scoreline of 8-8 at the interval.

The second half, in the taxing climate, could have been dangerous against a more dangerous side than the Southern Zone selection last Sunday, who scored 18 points to 14 in the second period against a stronger British team. The group of young players, only ten of

them from the day, Deryck Fox of Peterborough, Kevan Cooper of Hull, and two goals with only a goal in reply, and possibly prompted by a re-try by Malcolm Keilly, the coach, and his fellow selectors over places in the Test side.

Fox's tireless display could bring him preference over Bobbie Goulding of Wigan; Paul Dixon, who scored one of the second-half tries, was impressive in the front row, and Lee Jackson of Hull, while he is not going to displace Martin Dermott from Wigan, as hooker, could well find himself on the substitutes bench after a stint of non-stop tackling.

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GYMNASTICS

Prospects look good for Britain

By PETER AYKROYD

BRITAIN are "cautiously optimistic" of success in the men's European gymnastics championships at Lausanne on Saturday and Sunday, according to Eddie van Hoof, the men's national coach.

Neil Thomas and James May, respectively the British champion and runner-up, could at best achieve medals for floor and vault in a competition likely to be dominated by Soviet gymnasts. Thomas, indeed, won the vault and the silver medal for floor at the recent Grand Prix de Paris, defeating Valentin Mogilny and Sergei Kharov, the main Soviet contenders for the European individual title.

May was fourth in Europe last year on vault, and Terry Bartlett, the third member of the British team, won the Championships All International tournament at Birmingham.

Preparations for the Europeans has been thorough but relaxed, with Thomas and Bartlett attending a training camp in France for a fortnight this month.

For Mogilny, the world and European No. 2, the competition could be his last chance to win a leading overall title. A gifted performer of great experience, he is let down continually by a weak floor exercise. Last year, he was defeated for the title by only five-hundredths of a mark by Igor Korobchinsky, who later also became the world champion. Korobchinsky is not competing in this event.

Mark, the Olympic floor gold-medallist, is tackling his first important international championship since April. The third Soviet is Vitali Scherbo, a talented young gymnast tested at this level after finishing fourth in the Crucial Cup in Japan last November.

Other strong rivals include Andreas Wecker, of East Germany, ranked fourth in the world, and Marius Gherman, of Romania, who is ranked eighth. Of the Western gymnasts, Juri Chechi, of Italy, Alfonzo Rodriguez, of Spain, and Patrice Cazimir, of France, can be expected to perform with flair.

SQUASH RACKETS

Barrington beats drum

JONAH Barrington's efforts to continue the growth of the sport he set aside as a player in the 1970s are underway again this week as he drums up support for the Dunlop Champion of Champions summer tourney for club champions (Colin McQuillan writes).

"Squash is so much more than a winter alternative for tennis now," Barrington said. "The top professionals will be in Portugal and Greece over the next few weeks for increasingly competitive open titles. There are junior world titles in Ger-

many in July and a new European closed championship in the Netherlands in August."

The Champion of Champions tournament brings male and female club players, winners of their local closed tournaments, into direct confrontation at eight regional venues during the first week of next month. The regional winners move on to national quarter-finals and semi-finals in Coventry over the weekend of June 16 and national finals in London on June 20.

The winners will gain a year's kit sponsorship from Dunlop

and a place in the Dunlop Champion of Champions final in October.

• Preview by Jane Pontifex and the Mark Phillips eventing column

• Full colour show coverage from Shropshire and West Midlands, Leicester County, Brighton Driving and Larank County

• Preview of the Horse and Hound Final Champion Hunter 'Chase' at Stratford

• Extract from J.N.P. Watson's new book Horse and Carriage. Relive the pleasure of riding in London's Rotten Row

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HORSE and HOUND

THE WORLD'S BIGGEST SELLING EQUESTRIAN WEEKLY. OUT NOW

TENNIS

Moon Cactus to take centre stage

By MANDARIN

(MICHAEL PHILLIPS)
YESTERDAY, it was the three-year-old colts who occupied the stage at Goodwood. Today, it is the turn of the fillies, who contest the Sheraton Park Tower Lope Stakes over the same mile and a quarter.

So far no winner of this listed race has gone on to win the Oaks, although Scimitarra would have gone very close at Epsom in 1987 if only her off-the-canoe bone had not broken halfway up the straight.

Today, her trainer Henry Cecil relies upon Moon Cactus.

Interestingly, at Ascot she

had Fujairah 2½ lengths behind her in third place.

Kris has shown that he is able to sire horses who get further than he did when mated with the right mare.

It is reasonable to suppose that Moon Cactus should find today's trip well within her grasp, especially since she is out of a mare by Mill Reef.

As a two-year-old she took high rank after finishing only a head behind Silk Slipper in the group two Hoover Fillies' Mile at Ascot, that after winning at Goodwood and Newmarket.

She was going on really well

at the finish that day and I know that her trainer Paul Cole rates her quite highly. It is, however, pertinent to comment that Oriental Mystique, who she beat by a length that day, has done the form no favours by finishing last in the Musidora Stakes last August.

So Moon Cactus is taken to become the middle leg of a treble for her jockey Steve Caithan, a treble to be initiated by Pure Green (2.10) and completed by Far From Home (4.45).

The task of landing my nap is entrusted to the evergreen Willie Carson on



Razeen (Steve Caithan) racing clear to a four-length victory in the Predominate

Razeen's timely triumph adds to Derby confusion

By JACK WATERMAN

FURTHER seismic tremors shook the already uneasy Derby betting market at Goodwood yesterday when the ante-post favourite, *Digression*, finished next to last in the Predominate Stakes.

The colt was promptly removed from the ante-post lists by leading bookmakers, then

switched 5-1 with a furlong to

William Hill and 14-1 with

Coral and Ladbrokes when

Guy Harwood announced that

he was "still in there

fighting".

Razeen, the four-length win-

ner from Elmasmal, was in-

stalled as the new favourite at

3-1 by Victor Chandler, joint

favourite at 4-1 with Rock

Hopper by William Hill, Corals

meanwhile, made Rock Hopper

the new favourite at 3-1 with

Razeen 7-2, while least im-

pressed were Ladbrokes, going

4-1 favourite Rock Hopper and

5-1 Razeen.

So the last of the recognised

Derby trials followed the

bewildering pattern of all the

previous 1990 preliminaries

and the Derby, with exactly a

fortnight to go, looks one of

the most open for years.

Razeen, of the stable of

Sheikh Mohamed's 21 Derby entries,

was convincingly enough but

the time of 2min 59.8secs for

the 1½ miles was a slow one and his

trainers, Henry Cecil, comment-

ing on the fact that Razeen is a

late foal, and has yet to attain

his actual third birthday in June,

said: "I would be more con-

fident if the Derby were a month

later, but I don't suppose they'll

oblige me in that."

Steve Caithan, meanwhile,

said of his brother to Warshan,

who won the Predominate last

year: "To me it was a good

performance, he strode out nicely." And Sheikh Mohamed's racing manager, Anthony Stoud, commented: "It's al-

ways difficult when a horse

hasn't run at two and we wanted

to see if he was a Derby horse."

Pat Eddery completed a dou-

ble and reached his half-century

of winners for the season when

winning the Festival Stakes on

Rock of Gibraltar for the Peter

Walwyn stable, having earlier

had a smooth win in the

Ribblesdale Stakes.

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Britain's pretender in the hurdles plots to usurp the throne of Kingdom



Synchronized gym: anything Jackson can do, his tiny pupil can do just as well

Jackson longs for his school place in front of the queue

BY DAVID POWELL,
ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

THE first time Colin Jackson tried hurdling, it went brilliantly, so brilliantly that he jumped the school queue to demonstrate a second time to his class how it should be done. "I was 12 and the teacher sent me out because he said I should have gone to the back," Jackson said. As the world rankings show, he still cares little for queues.

The best high hurdlers on the circuit would be a Club 30 travel group but for the impatient young Welshman. They are all bunched around their thirtieth birthday except Jackson, who is 23, and only just. He stood in line for a while — third in the world championship, second in the Olympics, second in the World Cup — but he longs for his schoolboy place again, right at the front of the queue.

This could be the year Roger Kingdom has to move aside. He is the Olympic champion, World Cup winner, world No. 1 and world record holder, but Jackson was never far behind last year and his winter training promises to bring him out stronger. Does that mean quicker? "No, we cannot assume that," Malcolm Arnold, his coach, said. "But it is an excellent sign."

In January, Jackson confirmed his place as world No. 2 with a European record 13.08sec to win the Commonwealth Games. "Before Auckland my squat was 200 kilos, which was not a squat as we squat now," Jackson says. "My squat now is 230, a proper squat,

too, nice and deep. My clean has gone up from 125 to 130, my bench press from 100 to 115. My squat has gone up to 65 to 80." His confidence has gone up, too.

"He believes now he can put away any hurdler in the world," Arnold said. "His best race this year, we did not think was terribly good. The first part was quite weak — he skied the first hurdle. As far as his training is concerned, I will confirm what he has said. His strength levels have improved quite considerably since Auckland. What we have got to do now is translate that into performance."

Greg Foster, aged 31, Renaldo Nehemiah, 31, and Tony Campbell, 30 next month, three luminaries of the hurdles, were third, fourth and fifth in the 1989 rankings. Only Kingdom, aged 27, is ahead; catching him is important, but Jackson has a greater ambition this summer. "The most important thing is to be European

champion," Jackson says. "My second target is to be ranked No. 1 and my third is the world record."

The second-fastest European last year was Tony Jarrett, 0.20sec behind Jackson, a sound beating. Among the exceptional performances by British athletes indoors this winter was the improvement of Jarrett from 7.89sec to 7.50sec. So should it not be closer outdoors this year?

"No, not really," Jackson said. "I did one indoor competition, ran the fastest time in the world and went home to train." By which he was inferring that his own indoor time, a European record 7.41sec, would probably have been revised, too, had he run the full indoor season with Jarrett.

Instead, he chose to work for outdoor gain. The Canadian Olympic finalist, Mark McKoy, has been with him in Cardiff since the beginning of March, to their mutual benefit. "His

100 metres is 10.21sec — that is the kind of leg speed I'm looking to having and working out with him on the speedwork is great," Jackson says.

"The more I practise, the luckier I get," Gary Player used to say. Now that Jackson has been practising hard, it could be time for him to get lucky with the world record. Kingdom improved it to 12.92sec last year. "If his 12.87sec (wind-assisted) in the World Cup had counted, it would have been difficult, but 12.92 is within my grasp," Jackson said. He ran 12.95sec that day. "I do think the record will go this year," Jackson added.

Arnold discourages talk of world-record attempts. "You cannot do it," he said. "What happens if you set up a world-record attempt and the wind is three metres per second against you? Championships are more important because you have got to produce on a particular day. Records can come at any time when you fit all the right circumstances together."

Jackson has not always been a hurdler. He was a javelin thrower when Arnold was first drawn to him. "His reputation as a youngster was as a good all-round athlete," Arnold said. It was against the advice of his coach and parents that Jackson went full-time five years ago. "Colin plays for a living," his mum would say. And the teacher who sent him out of the class has never been allowed to forget. "He lives about four doors away from me," Jackson said. Only now he would love to see him at the head of the queue.

AAA cash in on a new deal

THE Amateur Athletic Association (AAA) has struck one of the most lucrative sponsorship deals in the history of the sport with a four-year agreement worth £2.9 million.

Panasonic, the electronics manufacturers, will now promote the flagship event of the domestic calendar, the AAA/WAAA championships, to be held at Birmingham in August.

The championships are traditionally the British trials for international events, and the selection of the team

for the European championships in Split will be based on this year.

Panasonic, which succeeds Kodak

as sponsors of Britain's most famous and oldest meeting, will also be backing the men's area leagues.

Bill Evans, the chairman of the AAA, said yesterday: "The largest package we have ever negotiated with a new sponsor to the sport."

"It is important for us that they are

a recognized and internationally re-

spected company which has shown a

long-term commitment to the sport."

Derbyshire tail turns elation to despair

BY JACK BAILEY

CHESTERFIELD (first day of three): Yorkshire, with all first-innings wickets in hand, are 274 runs behind Derbyshire

IT WAS cut-and-thrust all the way. First Derbyshire in the ascendant, then Yorkshire. Finally, with Miller and Base putting on 107 runs for the last wicket, it became Derbyshire's day. But not before a confident start had turned to ashes.

Derbyshire, cruising along at 201 for three, were sent plunging to 210 for nine before Base joined Miller in a stand which lasted for 2½ hours and changed Yorkshire's elation to despair.

This was only the second three-figure last-wicket partnership made for Derbyshire. The first was also against Yorkshire — 132 at Abbeyleix by Hill and Jean-Jacques in 1986 — and all the sweeter for that. But it can have been no more welcome on that occasion than Base's 38 and Miller's undefeated 47 were then.

The Derbyshire mood at lunch was forgivingly gung-ho. That famous victory at Taunton on Tuesday had left them riding high. Now, however, they had won the toss, Yorkshire's bowling had stayed in length and line and they had 160 on the board from 35 overs for the loss of Bass and Roberts.

The pitch was bare and there was talk of it taking spin before long. What was more, Morris had been at pains to set out his stall with care, and he was still there. He had opened with Barnett, watching and waiting, as first the Derbyshire captain and then Roberts piled into the Yorkshire attack. Barnett made 38 out of 44 before Fletcher, in his second ball, moved one away to give Bass the first of four well-taken slip catches.

He had also survived a straightforward chance to Fletcher at long leg and Fletcher was especially pleased to see him go.

The entry of Roberts gave Yorkshire no relief. His 49 came from just 61 balls. He pierced the field nine times for boundaries and only disdain caused him to ignore the backfoot drive, which gave Bass his second catch at second slip.

Meanwhile, Morris had opened up and was looking in fine fettle. It was when he became Bass's third victim — this time to a most brilliant catch from a hard slash — that Adams was run out — and that was it.

Suddenly, Yorkshire were rampant. The next eight overs saw the Midland tail melt to the extent that five wickets disappeared for six runs in the face of good, but not devastating, bowling by Hartley, Jarvis and Fletcher.

But Derbyshire were not done yet. Of their last-wicket pair, Miller, as his wits displayed sound defensive qualities and was solid as a rock from first to last, Base had more than one frantic moment, not least when Hartley claimed a caught-and-bowled, but long before the end he was playing as if battoning at No. 11 was well below his station.

DENBYSHIRE: J E Barrett c Bass b Fletcher 38; J E Morris c Bass b Jarvis 60; B Roberts c Bass b Jarvis 49; P D Bowler bowled by Bass 23; S C Goldsmith c Bass b Hartley 6; K M Krikken c Bass b Hartley 0; G Miller not out 47; A E Ward c Bass b Fletcher 0; S J Bass c Hartley b Berry 58; Extras (b, 1b, w, nb 6) 33; Total (4 wkt dec) 317; Fall of WICKETS: 1-44, 2-118, 3-180, 4-207, 5-201, 6-207, 7-207, 8-210, 9-210, 10-201, 11-201, 12-201, 13-201; Bass 23-43; Goldsmith 24-43; Krikken 25-43; Bass 26-3; Goldsmith 27-3; Bass 28-3; Goldsmith 29-3; Bass 30-3; Goldsmith 31-3; Bass 32-3; Goldsmith 33-3; Bass 34-3; Goldsmith 35-3; Bass 36-3; Goldsmith 37-3; Bass 38-3; Goldsmith 39-3; Bass 40-3; Goldsmith 41-3; Bass 42-3; Goldsmith 43-3; Bass 44-3; Goldsmith 45-3; Bass 46-3; Goldsmith 47-3; Bass 48-3; Goldsmith 49-3; Bass 50-3; Goldsmith 51-3; Bass 52-3; Goldsmith 53-3; Bass 54-3; Goldsmith 55-3; Bass 56-3; Goldsmith 57-3; Bass 58-3; Goldsmith 59-3; Bass 60-3; Goldsmith 61-3; Bass 62-3; Goldsmith 63-3; 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SPORT

England's old failings repeated

By ALAN LEE
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

HEADINGLEY (New Zealand won toss): New Zealand beat England by four wickets.

ENGLAND came to Headingley one early summer's day last year amid animated talk of a brave new dawn. They were wiped out by Australia. Yesterday, on the same ground, and with similarly heady anticipation, they disappointed again, this time losing to an underrated New Zealand.

Although the 1989 debacle was a Test match, and this a comparatively trivial one-day game which went to its penultimate ball, the parallels are hard to ignore.

Yesterday, as last year, England were beaten because they bowled carelessly and sometimes cluelessly against batsmen too good to pass up such philanthropy.

To win this first of two Texaco Trophy matches, New Zealand did bat well: they needed to, even on a pitch as good as this. Having been cruising to victory, needing 72 off 12 overs with eight wickets in hand, New Zealand made hard work of it, and it was Mark Greatbatch, sure to be one of the faces of this summer, who got them home with his maiden one-day century.

Ian Smith, a man made for such situations, clubbed the fifth ball of the final over for four to finish the job.

In choosing to chase runs,

New Zealand had in mind the limitations of their own bowling attack. Snedden's stomach strain was considered too bad to risk, and in his place came 22-year-old Chris Pringle, direct from Bradford League cricket with the Pudsey club.

Pringle was sensibly put straight into the game by Wright. Supporting Hadlee with the new ball, he kept to a commendably full length.

Later, memorably for him, he was to take the wicket of the England captain.

Gooch's reunion with Gower was not an instant success. Off the mark with a thick edge to third man, Gower fell in the fifth over.

Aiming to force through the on side against Hadlee, he failed to get over the ball.

That was New Zealand's last tangible success until just before lunch. It was the change bowling — Morrison, Millnow, and Priest — which gave England the scope for rapid acceleration.

Gooch was majestic, his six over long on against Millnow a study in balance. It was a surprise to all, visitors not exempt, when he departed. By then, Robin Smith was wandering along. The juggernaut of a player he is nowadays, he had his luck here, put down once by Morrison and twice — difficult chances — by Hadlee, but between times he massacred anything overpitched



Beaten to the punch: Alan Lamb continues on his way to the pavilion after being run out by the New Zealand wicketkeeper, Smith, yesterday

with a sequence of cover drives.

Lamb, reacting late to Smith's call, was run out by Stewart, who played a perky innings of real style, driving and pulling successive fours off Hadlee who had hitherto not conceded a boundary in eight overs.

Smith, using his feet against the seamers and easing the ball into gaps, passed his first one-day hundred for England and advanced to the fourth highest score in 18 years of such internationals in this country.

Hadlee tried to fox him with a slower ball but he waited and clubbed it through extra cover for four. Aiming to clear deep square leg from the next, he narrowly failed. Russell did not waste a ball and neither did England's Pringle.

With great conviction, he hit the last four balls of the innings for four. Hadlee, unbelievably was the bowler.

There seemed few in the ground who gave New Zealand a chance of making so many. Headingley was no more than two-thirds full, and all day long there had been a shortage of atmosphere.

Has the public grown tired of the repetitive one-day formula? Surely not. Maybe they had simply underestimated the tourists.

Wright announced his intentions by driving the first

ball of the reply for four. Thereafter he was not at his best for a time, but, along with the reliable Jones, another who is more about adhesion than appearances, he gave his side the ideal platform: 87 came from the first 20 overs, at which point Lewis had conceded 28 in four, and was looking raw and unprepared.

Gooch took the ball himself, good and timely captaincy. Within two overs, he had doubled his wickets tally for the season by dismissing both the openers.

To have Crowe and Greatbatch striding in, just when you feel you have broken the back of the job, is not a comforting sight. In the next 20 overs they added 118, the left-handed Greatbatch dominating the strike and the scoring. One punched drive for six over midwicket off

Pringle was the stroke of the day, but to be honest the batting was assisted by bowling which paid little heed to the disciplines of line and length.

It began to go wrong for New Zealand as soon as Crowe fell, gloving an attempted pull. Two balls later, Rutherford was given no benefit of the doubt for an lbw which looked high. The game had changed: Hadlee cut to gully, Lewis's third wicket in a transformed second spell, and Priest was blindingly caught by Gooch at short mid-wicket before they claimed the win they deserved.

• Gladstone Small, England's senior bowler in the one-day international series, is doubtful for tomorrow's second match after suffering thigh and groin damage while bowling at Headingley yesterday.

IN ENGLAND'S total of 295 for six, their best in the Texaco/Prudential Trophy against New Zealand, Robin Smith made his 100 in one-day international cricket. It was his fourth 100 of the month in all matches. New Zealand's Mark Greatbatch also made his maiden one-day international 100, as he compiled his highest one-day score against England and also the highest total by a side

batting second in all one-day internationals at the match also produced a record aggregate for a 55-over International in England.

Chris Lewis's best figures for England could not prevent New Zealand's remarkable four-wicket victory as they made the highest score ever to win a one-day international.

• Compiled by Richard Lockwood

SCORECARD FROM HEADINGLEY

New Zealand won toss

ENGLAND			
• Gooch c Millnow b Pringle	55	1	4
• Gooch c Priest b Hadlee	1	—	15
• Flick to square-leg	8		
• A J Smith c Crowe b Hadlee	128	—	198
• A J Smith not out	18	—	36
• A J Stewart lbw b Pringle	33	1	33
• Played across full-morison	30	5	31
• D R Pringle not out	13	3	4
• Gooch c Lamb b Lewis	1	—	6
• Gooch to square-leg wicket-keeper	1		
• P A J DeFreitas not out	1		
Extras (10th 1w 5nb)	16		
Total (5 wkt)	295		
C C Lewis, G C Small and E E Hemmings did not bat			
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-5, 2-118, 3-168, 4-225, 5-291, 6-274			
BOWLING: Hadlee 11-4-45-2 (nb 2); Pringle 11-2-45-2 (nb 1); Morrison 11-0-70-1 (nb 4); Lamb 11-0-37-3 (nb 1); Lewis 11-0-37-3 (nb 1); Gooch 4-0-23-0; Priest 11-0-37-3 (nb 1)			

ENGLAND

ENGLAND			
• G Wright c Stewart b Gooch	55	1	4
• Cut to long-distance pull	5	—	127
• D Gooch c Priest b Hadlee	1	—	15
• Flick to square-leg	8		
• R A Smith c Crowe b Hadlee	128	—	198
• A J Smith not out	18	—	36
• A J Stewart lbw b Pringle	33	1	33
• Played across full-morison	30	5	31
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• J G Wright c Stewart b Gooch	55	1	4
• Cut to long-distance pull	5	—	127
• D Gooch c Priest b Hadlee	1	—	15
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Europe verdict day looms for English clubs

By STEVE ACTESON

MEETINGS in Vienna today and in London next Wednesday will decide how much longer English football clubs must suffer for the actions of hooligans.

In Vienna, UEFA, the European football union, will consider whether English clubs should be allowed back into European competition next season for the first time since a ban was imposed after the disaster at the Heysel Stadium in Belgium before the 1985 European Cup final between Liverpool and Juventus.

A lifting of the ban seemed likely when, after being elected to the presidency in April, Lennart Johansson backed the readmission of English clubs. There was even talk of Liverpool being allowed back into the European fold.

But then came the events of May 5 at Bournemouth. Next Wednesday, a Football Association commission will conduct a full inquiry at Lancaster Gate into the violent scenes that marred Leeds United's promotion as second division champions and led to 73 arrests.

Some 4,000 ticketless Leeds supporters were locked out of the match at Dean Court and many of them vented their

frustration by attacking the police, passers-by and the Bournemouth supporters.

The names of the commission's members will be kept secret until Wednesday, which is normal FA practice. They will listen to evidence from AFC Bournemouth, Leeds, the Football League, which has already been heavily criticized for failing to heed police advice to change the match date, and from the Dorset FA and police.

The commission will not have powers to legislate what punishments should be meted out, if any, but its recommendations will carry great weight when the Football Association decides what action should be taken.

The timing of the commission means that subsequent action cannot affect the outcome of today's UEFA meeting, which goes ahead despite a plea from Colin Moynihan, the Minister for Sport, for the decision to be taken after the World Cup finals.

The plea was echoed by Leslie Silver, the Leeds chairman. He also wanted the decision delayed, until after the full facts emerged over the events of May 5.